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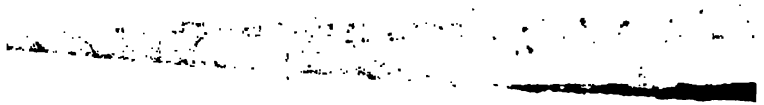
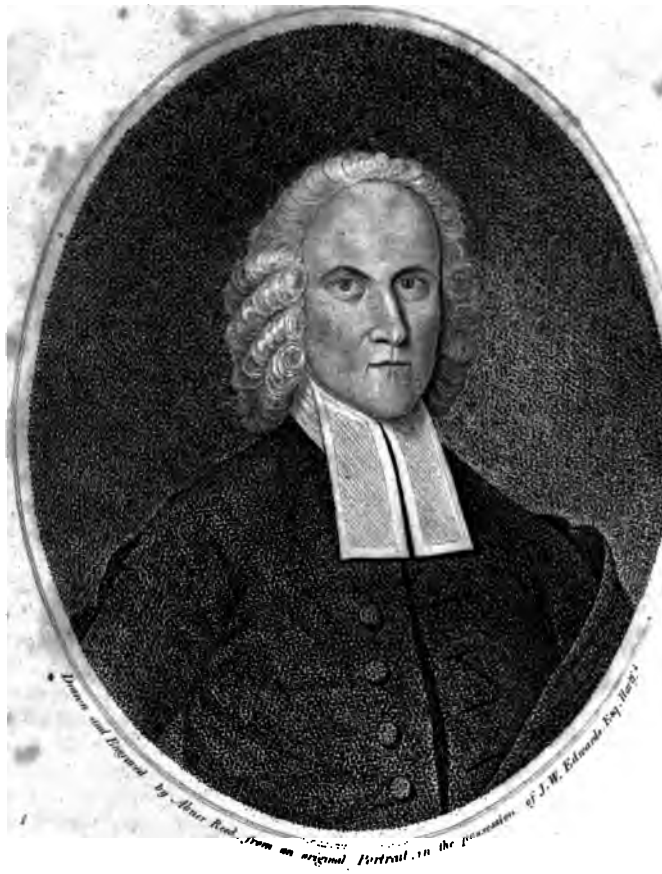
George Bancroft





Rev. JONATHAN EDWARDS

*President of Nassau-Hall College*

*NEW JERSEY.*

THE

# WORKS

OF

# PRESIDENT EDWARDS,

## IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

VOLUME I.

*CONTAINING*

I. MEMOIRS OF THE LATE REVEREND JONATHAN EDWARDS.
II. FAREWELL SERMON.
III. RESULT OF A COUNCIL AT NORTHAMPTON.
IV. HUMBLE INQUIRY CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE VISIBLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.
V. REPLY TO WILLIAMS.

*FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.*

PUBLISHED AT WORCESTER,
BY ISAIAH THOMAS, JUN.

*ISAAC STURTEVANT, PRINTER.*

1808.

District of Massachusetts, *to wit:*

L. S. BE IT REMEMBERED that on the twentyfifth day of October, in the thirty third year of the Independence of the United States of America, ISAIAH THOMAS, JR. of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"The Works of the Reverend JONATHAN EDWARDS, Minister of the Gospel in Northampton, Massachusetts, and afterwards President of the College in Newjersey.....IN EIGHT VOLUMES."

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WM. S. SHAW.
*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

THE

# WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

# JONATHAN EDWARDS,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

IN

*NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS,*

AND AFTERWARDS

# PRESIDENT

OF THE

COLLEGE IN NEWJERSEY.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

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# PREFACE.

## TO THE

## FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

THE Editor, in offering to the religious public, the Works of *President* EDWARDS, in what may, perhaps for this country, without impropriety, be called a standard edition, has gratified his personal attachment to this excellent man. He has sought also the advancement of the great doctrines of the cross, particularly among the younger clergy, and the excitement of their zeal by a persuasive example. Here they will have truth, accompanied, not with evidence only, but with demonstration. Here they will learn that conclusive arguing is as applicable to morals as to mathematics. Here they will see sophistry stript of its disguises, and systems of learned error frittered to nothing. Here they will have before them an example of research, the force of which they will not be able to resist. Modern times scarce furnish a more imitable character.

*President* EDWARDS began his career of virtuous exertion at an early period of life, and pursued it with a zeal and steadiness which could not but be successful. He had an object worthy of his pursuit, and he never lost sight of it. If much is to be ascribed to his talents, no less is to be attributed to his industry. And his industry is particularly imitable as it sprung from the best motives. Founded in the supreme love of God, and an ardent desire to do as much good as possible, it could not be conversant with trifles or degenerate into pastime. These writings are in part the fruit of it. They are fraught with instruction, and are entitled to a diligent and repeated perusal. The honorary declaration made in the preface to the English edition of these works, as it is entitled to full approbation, may properly have a place here. "Although we do not consider ourselves responsible for every sentiment of the Author, whose works we publish, we will nevertheless freely acknowledge, that were we to assume any such responsibility, or were we disposed to hold up the writings of any fallible man, as forming our standard of faith, we should not hesitate to give our most decided preference to EDWARDS and OWEN. In these authors we see the soundest principles united with the most fervent charity." In similar terms another respectable English divine writes to his friend in

America, (March 25, 1808.)—JONATHAN EDWARDS is, in my esteem, the *Coryphæus* of modern divines, as Dr. OWEN was of the preceding century. EDWARDS is every day rising in esteem among dissenters, so that his works sell very fast."

It has been the *Editor's* aim to meet the expectations which the proposals warranted the patrons of the work to form. He has used his best discretion in the arrangement, and as far as his attention would go, in the midst of many and pressing avocations, has labored to have the typography correct. It was found necessary to use a smaller type than was first intended. This is a material advantage to the subscriber, as he has proportionably a greater quantity of matter in each page. The pages have also swelled to a greater number than was promised. After all, a few posthumous, unfinished discourses of the author, and some of his miscellanies, consisting principally of quotation, we have been necessitated to omit. The multiplying of notes, upon the plan of elucidating and correcting the sentiments of so sagacious a divine, was, after reflection, and after observing with some carefulness how others have done in this matter, thought too adventurous. An index to assist the reader in recurring to particular subjects, will be an acceptable substitute for these. That the work may be extensively useful, is the hope and prayer of the Editor,

SAMUEL AUSTIN.

WORCESTER, (Mass.) *November* 1, 1808.

N B. The reader will observe in the Treatise on the "Nature of Virtue," several references to that on "The end of God in creating the World," as a foregoing Treatise. These have heretofore been sewed together, so as to agree with the references And it was our intention to have placed the latter Treatise at the end of the first volume, which was printed after the second. But the other pieces swelled the volume, so that we had no room for it. The reader must of course look forward to the SIXTH volume for this Treatise.

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# MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE REVEREND

# JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

## CHAPTER I.

### *Mr.* EDWARDS's *Birth, Parentage, Education and Entrance into the Ministry.*

PRESIDENT EDWARDS was one of those men of whom it is not easy to speak with justice without seeming, at least, to border on the marvellous, and to incur the guilt of adulation. The Christian Biographer labors under a difficulty, in describing the characters of extraordinary men, which the writers of other lives are but too generally allowed to forget; for he is bound so to represent actions and motives, as to remind his readers, that the uncommon excellencies of a character, flow entirely from the bounty of heaven, for the wisest and best purposes, and are not the result of natural vigor and acumen. Otherwise, instead of placing these excellencies in a view advantageous for imitation, or describing a character attainable, as to its most valuable traits, only by gracious aids, there would be danger of setting up an idol, more precious indeed than gold, but still an idol, whereby the mind would be led astray from the one great object of the Christian life, JESUS CHRIST, whose fullness *filleth all in all.* While we have a just view of *him*, it is a privilege to hear of his wonderful works in and by his honored servants; and to be enabled to imitate them is a great augmentation of the privilege. If *their* graces, exemplified in a variety of circumstances, in a manner force us to a throne of grace, and thereby prove the means of quickening *ours*; then do we make a

right use of their history, and follow them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Mr. JONATHAN EDWARDS was born on the 5th of October, 1703, at Windsor, in the then Province of Connecticut, North America. His father, the Rev. TIMOTHY EDWARDS, was minister of that place almost sixty years, and resided there from November, 1694, till January, 1758, when he died in the 89th year of his age; not two months before this his only son Jonathan. He was very universally beloved, and esteemed, as an upright, pious, exemplary man; a faithful and very useful minister of the gospel. A few more particulars of this excellent man will be acceptable. He was born at Hartford, in Connecticut, May 14th, 1669, received the honors of the college at Cambridge, in Newengland, by having the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts given him the same day, July 4th, 1694, one in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon. On November 6, 1694, he married Esther Stoddard, daughter of the Rev. and celebrated Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, in the 23d year of her age. They lived together in the married state above sixty three years. Mrs. Edwards, our author's mother, was born June 2d, 1672, and lived to about ninety years of age, (some years after her son) a remarkable instance of the small decay of mental powers at so advanced an age. This venerable couple had eleven children; one son, the subject of these Memoirs, and ten daughters, four of whom were older, and six younger than himself.*

* We shall here subjoin a sketch of Mr. Edwards's more remote ancestors, as it may gratify some readers. Jonathan Edwards's grandfather was Richard Edwards, who married Elizabeth Tuttle, daughter of William Tuttle, of Newhaven, in Connecticut, and Elizabeth his wife, who came from Northamptonshire, in Old England. By this connexion he had seven children, of whom the eldest was Timothy, our author's father. His second marriage was to Mrs. Talcot, sister to governor Talcot, by whom he had six children. The father of Richard was William Edwards, Jonathan's great grandfather, who came from England young and unmarried. The person he married, whose Christian name was Agnes, and who had left England for America, had two brothers in England, one of them Mayor of Exeter, and the other of Barnstable. The father of William, Richard Edwards, our author's

Mr. Edwards entered Yale college, when about twelve years of age; and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Sept. 1720, a little before he was seventeen. While at college, his character was marked with sobriety and improvement in learning. In the second year of his collegiate course he

great great grandfather, was minister of the gospel in London, in the reign of queen Elizabeth; and his wife, Ann Edwards, was employed in making some part of the royal attire. After the death of Mr. Edwards, she married Mr. James Cole, who with her son William accompanied her to America, and all died at Hartford in Connecticut.

President Edwards's grandfather on the mother's side, Rev. Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, Newengland, married Mrs. Mather, the relict of the Rev. Mr. Mather his predecessor, who was the first minister at Northampton. Her maiden name was Esther Warham, daughter, and the youngest child of the Rev. John Warham, minister at Windsor, in Connecticut, and who, before he left England, had been minister at Exeter. This lady had three children by Mr. Mather, viz. Eunice, Warham, and Eliakim; and twelve children by Mr. Stoddard, six sons and six daughters. Three of the sons died in infancy, and three lived to adult years, viz. Anthony, John, and Israel; the last of whom died a prisoner in France. Anthony was minister of the gospel at Woodbury, in Connecticut; he was in the ministry about sixty years, and died September 6, 1760, in the 82d year of his age. John lived at Northampton, and often, especially in his younger years, served the town as their representative, at the General Court at Boston; and was long head of the county of Hampshire, as chief colonel, and chief judge of the court of common pleas. He moreover served in the province of Massachusetts Bay, as one of his Majesty's council. He distinguished himself as an able politician, a wise counsellor, an upright and skillful judge; possessed in an eminent degree the spirit of government, and ever proved a great and steady friend to the interest of religion. He was a great friend and admirer of our Mr. Edwards, and to the time of his death, greatly strengthened his hands in the work of the ministry. A more particular account of the life and character of this truly great man, may be seen in the sermon which Mr. Edwards preached and published, on the occasion of his death. The father of Mr. Solomon Stoddard, and Mr. Edwards's great grandfather, on the mother's side, was Anthony Stoddard, Esq. of Boston, a zealous congregational man. He had five wives, the first of whom was Mary Downing, sister to Sir George Downing, whose other sister married Governor Bradstreet. Solomon was the first child of this first marriage. From these particulars it appears, that Mr. Edwards's ancestors were from the west of England, who, upon their emigration, allied themselves to some of the most respectable families in America.

read Locke on the Human Understanding with much delight. His uncommon genius, by which he was naturally formed for close thought and deep penetration, now began to discover and exert itself. From his own account, he was inexpressibly entertained and pleased with that book, when he read it at college ; more so than the most greedy miser, when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some newly discovered treasure. Though he made good proficiency in all the arts and sciences, and had an uncommon taste for Natural Philosophy, (which he cultivated to the end of his life) yet Moral Philosophy, including divinity, was his favorite subject, in which he made great progress in early life.

He lived at college nearly two years after he took his first degree, preparing for the work of the ministry. After which, having passed the usual trials, he was licensed to preach the gospel as a candidate. In consequence of an application from a number of ministers in Newengland, who were intrusted to act in behalf of the English Presbyterians in Newyork, he went to that city the beginning of August, 1722, and preached there with great acceptance about eight months. But on account of the smallness of that society, and some special difficulties that attended it, he did not think there was a rational prospect of answering the good end proposed, by his settling there as their minister. He therefore left them the next spring, and retired to his father's house, where he spent the summer in close study. He was earnestly solicited by the people to return again to Newyork ; but his former views were not altered, and therefore, however disposed to gratify them, he could not comply with their wishes.

In Sept, 1723, he received his degree of Master of Arts. About this time several congregations invited him to become their minister ; but being chosen tutor of Yale College, he chose to continue in that retirement, and attended the business of tuition there above two years. During his stay there, he was applied to by the people of Northampton, who had some powerful motives to offer, in favor of his exercising his ministry there ; and especially that his grandfather Stoddard, by reason of his great age, stood in need of assistance. He

therefore resigned his tutorship in Sept. 1726, and accepted their invitation, and was ordained as colleague with his grandfather, Feb. 15, 1727, in the twentyfourth year of his age, and continued at Northampton twentythree years and four months.

## CHAP. II.

### *Extracts from his Private Writings.*

BETWEEN the time of his going to Newyork and his settlement at Northampton, Mr. Edwards formed a number of Resolutions, which are still preserved. The particular time, and special occasion of making many of these resolutions, he has noted in a Diary which he then kept; where we also find many other observations and rules relative to his own exercises and conduct. As these private writings may be justly considered the basis of his conduct, or the plan according to which his whole life was governed, it may be proper here to give the reader some idea of them by the following extracts.

#### SECT. I.

*His Resolutions.*

Mr. Edwards was too well acquainted with human weakness and frailty, where the intention is most sincere, to enter on any resolutions rashly. He therefore looked to God for aid, who alone can afford success in the use of any means. This he places at the head of all his other important rules, that his dependance was on grace, while he frequently recurred to a serious perusal of them....“ Being sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God's help, I do humbly intreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.” He then adds:—

"REMEMBER TO READ OVER THESE RESOLUTIONS ONCE A WEEK."*

1. Resolved, that *I will do whatsoever* I think to be most to God's glory and my own good, profit and pleasure, ON THE WHOLE; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence; to do whatever I think to be my *duty*, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general.....whatever *difficulties* I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavoring to find some *new contrivance* to promote the forementioned things.

4. Resolved, *never to* DO, BE, *or* SUFFER, any thing in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of *time*; but improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.†

* The Resolutions, as contained in the original manuscript, were seventy in number, a part only is here transcribed, as a specimen of the whole. The figures perfixed to them are those by which they were numbered in that manuscript; and they are here retained for the sake of the references made to some of them in the Diary, as the reader will find in the subsequent part of these Memoirs. It may be proper to add, that we should regard the *spirit* of these resolutions, and of the following extracts from the Diary, without a minute attention to the critical nicety of his language. In fact, as these extracts were penned at a very early period of life, his style was not formed; and his chief concern was to deal plainly with himself, in the presence of God, and to record for his own private inspection what he thought might be of most use to him in future.—

† This is the full and exact import of the Latin Motto, "*Dum vivimus, vivamus;*" which was the motto of Dr. Doddridge's family arms, and which he paraphrased with so much beauty.

"Live, while you live," the *Epicure* would say,
"And seize the pleasures of the present day.
Live, while you live, the sacred *preacher* cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies.
Lord, in my views let both united be;
I live in *pleasure*, when I live to *thee*."—

7. Resolved, never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

9. Resolved, to think much, on all occasions, of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.

11. Resolved, when I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder.

13. Resolved, to be endeavoring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

14. Resolved, never to do any thing out of revenge.

15. Resolved, never to suffer the least motion of anger to irrational beings.

17. Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

18. Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of the gospel and another world.

20. Resolved, to maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.

21. Resolved, never to do any thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.

24. Resolved, whenever I do any evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then both carefully endeavor to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.

28. Resolved, to study the scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

30. Resolved, to strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

32. Resolved to be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that Prov. xx. 6. (*A faithful man who can find?*) may not be partly fulfilled in me.

33. Resolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining, and establishing peace, when it can be done without an overbalancing detriment in other respects.

34. Resolved, never to speak in narrations any thing but the pure and simple verity.

36. Resolved, never to speak evil of any person, except some particular good call for it.

37. Resolved, to inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself; also at the end of every week, month, and year.

38. Resolved never to speak any thing that is ridiculous, or matter of laughter on the Lord's day.

39. Resolved, never to do any thing that I so much question the lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no: Except I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

41. Resolved, to ask myself at the end of every day, week, month and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better.

42. Resolved frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism; which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have solemnly ratified this twelfth day of January, 1723.

43. Resolved, never to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.

46. Resolved, never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our family.

47. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good, and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, easy, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere temper; and to do at all times what such a temper would lead me to. Examine strictly every week, whether I have done so.

48. Resolved, constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of.

50. Resolved, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age.

54. Whenever I hear any thing spoken in conversation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, Resolved to endeavor to imitate it.

55. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and hell torments.

56. Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. Resolved, when I fear misfortunes and adversities, to examine whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as Providence orders it, I will as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty, and my sin.

62. Resolved, never to do any thing but duty; and then, according to Eph. vi. 6.....8, do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to man; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

65. Resolved, to exercise myself much in this all my life long, viz. with the greatest openness to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him; all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance; according to Dr. Manton's 27th sermon on the 119th psalm.

67. Resolved, after afflictions, to inquire, What I am the better for them; what good I *have* got, and what I *might* have got by them."

## SECT. II.

*Extracts from his Diary.*

THOUGH Mr. EDWARDS wrote his Diary for his own private use, exclusively, it is not apprehended that the following extracts are unfairly exposed to public view. Whatever is calculated to do good, and is perfectly consistent with an author's real reputation, may be published with honor, whatever his design might be while writing. Besides, what Mr. EDWARDS wished to have effectually concealed from every eye but his own, he wrote in a particular short hand. After having written pretty much in that character, he adds this remark in long hand: "Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*"

"*Saturday, Dec.* 22, 1722. This day, revived by God's Holy Spirit. Affected with a sense of the excellency of holiness. Felt more exercise of love to Christ than usual. Have also felt sensible repentance for sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This night, made the 37th Resolution.

*Sabbath Night, Dec.* 22. Made the 38th Resolution.

*Monday, Dec.* 24. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Jesus Christ and his kingdom.

*Wednesday, Jan.* 2, 1723. Dull. I find by experience, that let me make resolutions, and do what I will, it is all nothing, and to no purpose at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God: For if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow; but should languish, and miserably fade away. There is no dependence upon myself. It is to no purpose to resolve, except we depend on the grace of God; for if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next.

*Sabbath, Jan.* 6, at night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceasing, as long as in this world.

*Tuesday, Jan.* 8, in the morning. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual repentance for sin therefrom.

*Wednesday, Jan.* 9, at night. Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think, I have a great deal more of holiness than I really have. I find, now and then, that abominable corruption which is directly contrary to what I read respecting eminent Christians. How deceitful is my heart! I take up a strong resolution, but how soon does it weaken!

*Thursday, Jan.* 10, about noon. Reviving. It is a great dishonor to Christ, in whom I hope I have an interest, to be uneasy at my worldly state and condition: When I see the prosperity of others, and that all things go easy with them; when the world is smooth to them, and they are happy in many respects, and very prosperous, or are advanced to much honor, &c. to envy them, or be the least uneasy at it; or even to wish for the same prosperity, and that it would ever be so with me. Wherefore concluded, always to rejoice in every one's prosperity, and to expect for myself no happiness of that nature as long as I live; but reckon upon afflictions, and betake myself entirely to another happiness.

I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my selfdenial in eating, drinking, and sleeping. I think it would be advantageous every morning to consider my business and temptations; and what sins I shall be exposed to that day: And to make a resolution how to improve the day, and to avoid those sins. And so at the beginning of every week, month and year. I never knew before what was meant by not setting our hearts upon these things. It is, not to care about them, depend upon them, afflict ourselves much with fears of losing them, or please ourselves with expectation of obtaining them, or hope of their continuance. At night made the 41st Resolution.

*Saturday, Jan.* 12, in the morning. I have this day solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and selfdedication, which I renewed when I was received into the communion of the church. I have been before God; and have given myself, all that I am and have to God, so that I am not in any respect

my own: I can claim no right in myself, no right in this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: No right to this tongue, these hands, nor feet: No right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell or taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained any thing as my own. I have been to God this morning, and told him that I gave myself *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; so that for the future, I will challenge or claim no right in myself, in any respect. I have expressly promised him, and do now promise Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. And did believe in Jesus Christ, and receive him as a prince and a saviour; and would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, how hazardous and difficult soever the profession and practice of it may be. That I did receive the blessed Spirit as my teacher, sanctifier and only comforter; and cherish all his motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort, and assist me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a selfdedication; and to receive me now as entirely his own, and deal with me in all respects as such; whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth I am not to act in any respect as my own. I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, or do not make the glorifying of him my whole and entire business; if I murmur in the least at afflictions; if I grieve at the prosperity of others; if I am any way uncharitable; if I am angry because of injuries; if I revenge my own cause; if I do any thing purely to please myself, or avoid any thing for the sake of my ease, or omit any thing because it is great selfdenial; if I trust to myself; if I take any of the praise of any good that I do, or rather God

does by me ; or if I am any way proud. This day made the 42d and 43d Resolutions.

*Monday, Jan.* 14. The dedication I made of myself to my God, on Saturday last, has been exceeding useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the scripture while reading the 8th chapter to the Romans, than ever in my life before. Great instances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of sin, hard blows that make him stagger and reel ; we thereby get firm ground and footing against him. While we live without great instances of mortification and selfdenial, the old man keeps whereabouts he was ; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small blows. After the greatest mortifications, I always find the greatest comfort. Supposing there was never but one complete Christian, in all respects, of a right stamp, having Christianity shining in its true lustre, at a time in the world ; resolved, to act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, that should be in my time.

*Tuesday, Jan.* 15. It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday, that I should always retain the same resolutions to the same height, but alas, how soon do I decay ! O, how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing am I ! What a poor, inconsistent, miserable wretch, without the assistance of God's Spirit ! While I stand, I am ready to think I stand in my own strength ; and am ready to triumph over my enemies, as if it were I myself that caused them to flee ; when alas ! I am but a poor infant, upheld by Jesus Christ ; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to smile to see my enemies flee, when he drives them before me ; and so I laugh, as though I myself did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights himself against my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, how weak do I find myself ! O, let it teach me to depend less on myself, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my ability to Jesus Christ. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it ?

*Saturday, Feb.* 16. I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel requires. At night. I have been neg-

ligent for the month past in these three things; I have not been watchful enough over my appetite in eating and drinking; in rising too late; and in not applying myself enough to the duty of secret prayer.

*Sabbathday*, *Feb.* 17, near sunset. Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God, for my whole portion; and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever prosperity, upon any account, I see others enjoy, and I am denied.

*Saturday*, *March* 2. O, how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleasures of humility are really the most refined, inward and exquisite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm that lifts up itself with pride! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived, poor worm am I, when pride works!

*Wednesday*, *March* 6, near sunset. Felt the doctrines of election, free grace, and of our not being able to do any thing without the grace of God; and that holiness is entirely, throughout, the work of God's Spirit, with more pleasure than before.

*Monday Morning*, *April* 1. I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the faults, follies and infirmities of others.

*Saturday Night April* 6. This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me, that I should never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay! I know O Lord, that without thy help, I shall fall innumerable times, notwithstanding all my resolutions, how often so ever repeated.

*Saturday Night*, *April* 13. I could pray more heartily this night, for the forgiveness of my enemies, than ever before.

*Wednesday*, *May* 1. Forenoon. Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from Newyork. I have always, in every different state of life I have hitherto been in, thought the troubles and difficulties of that state to be greater than those of any other that I proposed to be in; and when I have

altered with assurance of mending myself, I have still thought the same ; yea, that the difficulties of that state, are greater than those of that I left last. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my thoughts, affections, desires and expectations, entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state ; where there is fulness of joy ; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love without alloy ; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love ; where there is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting ; where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb ! How will it fill us with joy to think, this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never come to an end, but will last to eternity. Remember, after journies, removes, overturnings, and alterations in the state of my life, to consider, whether therein I have managed the best way possible, respecting my soul ? and before such alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

*Thursday, May* 2. I think it a very good way to examine dreams every morning when I awake ; what are the nature, circumstances, principles and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them, to discern what are my chief inclinations, &c.

*Saturday Night, May* 4. Although I have in some measure subdued a disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination which is not agreeable to Christian sweetness of temper and conversation : Too dogmatical, too much of egotism ; a disposition to be telling of my own dislike and scorn ; and freedom from those things that are innocent, or the common infirmities of men ; and many such like things. O that God would help me to discern all the flaws and defects of my temper and conversation, and help me in the difficult work of amending them ; and that he would fill me so full of Christianity, that the foundation of all these disagreeable irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary beauties may follow.

*Sabbathday, May* 5, in the morning. This day made the 47th resolution.

*Sabbathday, May* 12. I think I feel glad from the hope that my eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy joys, arising from the manifestation of God's love, and the exercise of holiness and a burning love to him.

*Saturday Night, May* 18. I now plainly perceive what great obligations I am under to love and honor my parents. I have great reason to believe, that their counsel and education have been of great use to me; notwithstanding, at the time, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good reason to hope that their prayers for me have been in many things very powerful and prevalent; that God has in many things, taken me under his care and guidance, provision and direction, in answer to their prayers. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

*Wednesday, May* 22, in the morning. *Memorandum.* To take special care of these following things; evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking simple verity, joining in prayer, slightness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

*Saturday, May* 25, in the morning. As I was this morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I was now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my state, whether it be good or bad; and that I had taken more pains to see, and narrowly search into this matter. Wherefore, *Mem.* For the future most nicely and diligently to look into our old Divines concerning conversion. Made the 48th Resolution.

*Friday, June* 1, afternoon. I have abundant cause, O merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly to bless and praise thee, that thou hast heard me in my earnest request, and hast so answered my prayer for mercy to keep from decay and sinking. O, graciously, of thy mere goodness, continue to pity my misery by reason of my sinfulness. O, my dear Redeemer, I commit myself, together with my prayer and thanksgiving into thine hand.

*Monday, July* 1. Again confirmed by experience of the happy effects of strict temperance, with respect both to body and mind. Resolved for the future to observe rather more of meekness, moderation, and temper in disputes.

*Thursday, July* 18, near sunset. Resolved to endeavor to make sure of that sign the Apostle James gives of a perfect man, James iii. 2. *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

*Monday, July* 22. I see there is danger of my being drawn into transgression by a fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch against it.

*Tuesday, July* 23. When I find those groanings which cannot be uttered, that the apostle speaks of; and those soul breakings for the longing it hath, which the psalmist speaks of, Psal. cxix. 20, let me humor and promote them to the utmost of my power, and be not weary of earnestly endeavoring to vent my desires. I desire to count it all joy when I have occasion of great selfdenial, because then I have a glorious opportunity of giving deadly wounds to the body of sin, and greatly confirming and establishing the new nature; to seek to mortify sin, and increase in holiness; these are the best opportunities, (according to January 14) to improve afflictions of all kinds, as blessed opportunities of forcibly bearing on in my Christian course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, to damp the vigor of my mind, and to make me lifeless; also as opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, habitually, according to the 57th Resolution; and of rending my heart off from the world, and setting it upon heaven alone; to repent of, and bewail my sin, and abhor myself; and as a blessed opportunity to exercise patience, to trust in God, and divert my mind from the affliction, by fixing myself in religious exercises. Also, let me comfort myself, that it is the very nature of afflictions to make the heart better; and if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present?

*Friday, July* 26. To be particularly careful to keep up an inviolable trust and reliance, ease and entire rest, in God, in

all conditions according to the 57th Resolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous.

*Monday, July* 29. When I am concerned how I shall perform any thing to public acceptance, to be very careful that I do what is duty and prudence in the matter.

*Wednesday, July* 31. Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of others' faults. Never to give credit to any thing said against others, except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave in any respect otherwise for it.

*Wednesday, August* 7. To esteem it an advantage that the duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are sometimes to be gone through in the way of duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by labor is abundantly more precious; as a woman loves her child the better for having brought it forth with travail. And even as to Christ Jesus himself in his mediatorial glory, (including his victory and triumph, and the kingdom which he hath obtained) how much more glorious, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out by such agonies!

*Friday, August* 9. One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in time of vacation or leisure is, that when I light on a profitable thought, I can fix my mind in order to follow it, as far as possible to advantage.

*Sabbathday*, after meeting, *August* 11. Resolved always to do that which I shall wish I had done, when I see others do it. As for instance, sometimes I argue with myself, that such an act of good nature, kindness, forbearance or forgiveness, &c. is not my duty, because it will have such and such consequences; yet, when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it; and I see that none of these feared inconveniences do follow.

*Tuesday, August* 13. I find it would be very much to my advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the scriptures. When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can see upon what foundation I stand.

*Thursday, August* 29. The objection my corruptions make against doing whatever my hand finds to do with my

might is, that it is a constant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

*Monday, September* 2. There is much folly, when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, in entering into a vehement or long debate upon it.

*Monday, September* 23. I observe that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries; because these are beside a way of thinking they have been so long used to. Resolved, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking.

*Thursday, October* 18. To follow the example of Mr. B——, who, though he meets with great difficulties, yet undertakes them with a smiling countenance, as though he thought them but little; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

*Thursday November* 26. It is a most evil and penicious practice in meditating on our afflictions, to ruminate on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckon up the evil circumstances thereof, dwelling long on the dark side; it doubles and trebles the affliction. And so, when speaking of them to others as bad as we can, and use our eloquence to set forth our own troubles; we thus are all the while making new trouble, and feeding the old; whereas the contrary practice would starve our afflictions. If we dwelt on the light side of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that possibly we could when speaking of them, we should then think little of them ourselves; and the affliction would really, in a great measure vanish away.

*Thursday Night, December* 12. If at any time I am forced to tell persons of that wherein I think they are sometimes to blame; for avoiding the important evil that would otherwise ensue, resolved not to tell it them in such a manner, that there shall be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind.

*December* 31, at night. Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry emotions of mind more or less, except the honor of God calls for it, in zeal for him, or to preserve myself from being trampled on.

*Wednesday, January* 1, 1724. Not to spend too much time in thinking even of important and necessary worldly business. To allow every thing its proportion of thought according to its urgency and importance.

*Friday, Jan.* 10. [After short hand notes] Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*

*Monday, Feb.* 3. Let every thing have the value now, that it will have on a sick bed; and frequently in my pursuits of whatever kind, let this come into my mind; "How much shall I value this on my death bed?"

*Wednesday, Feb.* 5. Have not in time past, in my prayers, insisted enough upon glorifying God in the world, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the good of men. Determined that this objection is without weight, viz. "That it is not likely that God will make great alterations in the whole world, and overturnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obscure person, seeing such things used to be done in answer to the united earnest prayers of the whole church; and if my prayers should have some influence, it would be but imperceptible and small."

*Thursday, Feb* 6. More convinced than ever of the usefulness of religious conversation. I find by coversing on natural philosophy, I gain knowledge abundantly faster, and see the reasons of things much clearer, than in private study. Wherefore, resolved earnestly to seek at all times for religious conversation; and for those persons that I can with profit, delight, and freedom so converse with.

*Sabbathday, Feb.* 23. If I act according to my resolution, I shall desire riches no otherwise than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of scripture, that to fallen man they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

*Saturday, May* 23. How it comes about I know not; but I have remarked it hitherto that at those times when I have read the scriptures most, I have evermore been most lively, and in the best frame.

*Saturday Night, June* 6. This has been a remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares and distraction of thought; being the week I came hither (to Newhaven) in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and perpetual vexation of the world.

*Tuesday, July* 7. When I am giving the relation of a thing, let me abstain from altering, either in the matter or manner of speaking, so much, as that if every one afterward should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

*Tuesday, Sept.* 2. By a sparing diet, and eating what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly; and shall gain time, 1st, By lengthening my life; 2dly, Shall need less time for digestion after meals; 3dly, Shall be able to study closer without wrong to my health; 4thly, Shall need less time to sleep; 5thly, Shall more seldom be troubled with the headache.

*Sabbathday, Nov.* 22. Considering that bystanders always espy some faults which we do not see, or at least are not so fully sensible of ourselves; for there are many secret workings of corruption which escape our sight, and others only are sensible of; resolved, therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me that appear any way blameworthy, unlovely, or unbecoming."

## SECT. III.

*Some Account of his Conversion, Experience, and Religious Exercises, written by himself.*

The foregoing extracts were written by Mr. Edwards when about twenty years of age, as appears by the dates.

The judicious reader, therefore, keeping this in mind, will make proper allowance for some things which may appear like the productions of a young Christian, both as to the matter, and the manner of expression. And indeed, the whole being taken together, these apparent blemishes have their important use. For hereby all appears more natural and genuine; while the strength of his resolution, the fervor of his mind, and a skill in discriminating divine things so seldom found even in old age, appear the more striking. A picture of human nature in its present state, though highly improved by grace, cannot be a true resemblance of the original, if it be drawn all light, and no shades. In this view we shall be forced to admire his conscientious strictness, his diligence and zeal, his deep experience in some particulars, and his accurate judgment respecting the most important parts of true religion, at so early an age. Here we have, not only the most convincing evidence of his sincerity in religion, and of his engaging in a life devoted to God in good earnest, so as to make religion his one great business; but also, through his great attention to this matter, how in many instances he acquired the judgment and experience of gray hairs.

Behold, reader, the beginning of a life so eminently holy and useful! Behold the views, the exercises, the resolutions of a man who became one of the greatest divines of his age; one who had the applause and admiration of America, Britain, Holland, and Germany, for his piety, judgment, and great usefulness. Behold here an excitement to the young, to devote themselves to God with great sincerity, and enter on the work of strict religion without delay, and more especially, those who are looking forward towards the work of the ministry. Behold then, ye students in divinity, our future preachers and writers, the most immediate and direct, yea the only way to answer the good ends which you profess to seek. "Go, ye, and do likewise."

It is to be lamented, that there is so much reason to think, there are few instances of such early piety in our day. If the protestant world abounded with young persons of this

stamp ; young men, preparing for the work of the ministry with such a temper, such exercises, and such resolutions, what a delightful prospect would this afford of the near approach of happier days, than the church of God has ever yet seen ! What pleasing hopes, that the great and merciful head of the church was about to send forth laborers, faithful, successful laborers into his harvest ; and bless his people with " pastors which shall feed them with knowledge and understanding !"

But if our youth neglect all proper improvement of the mind ; are shy of seriousness and strict piety ; choose to live at a distance from all appearance of it ; and are given to carnal pleasures ; what a gloomy prospect does this afford ! If they who enter into the work of the ministry ; from a gay, careless, and what may justly be called a vicious life, betake themselves to a little superficial study of divinity, and soon begin to preach ; while all the external seriousness and zeal they put on, is only from wordly motives ; they being without any inward, experimental acquaintance with divine things, and even so much as any taste for true divinity ; no wonder if the people perish for lack of spiritual knowledge.

But, as the best comment on the foregoing Resolutions and Diary ; and that the reader may have a more full and instructive view of Mr. Edwards's entrance on a religious life, and progress in it, as to the views and exercises of his mind ; a brief account thereof is here inserted, which was found among his papers, in his own hand writing ; and which, it seems, was written near twenty years after, for his own private advantage.

" I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood ; but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation ; and was abund-

ant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much selfrighteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my schoolmates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely lost all those affections and delights and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God, to seize me with a pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet, it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise many religious duties; but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and selfreflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, wheth-

er such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account, how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's shewing mercy to whom he will shew mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i. 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever, Amen.* As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature in this.

From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words Cant. ii. 1, used to be abundantly with me, *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of the valleys.* The words seemed to me, sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness, that would carry me away, in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in

the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express.

Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean time, singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder storm; and used

to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant for my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

I felt then great satisfaction, as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28. *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath.* I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceeding different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what I then had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colors. They were of a more inward, pure, soul animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul satisfying and life-giving good there is in them.

My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, until I went to preach at Newyork, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done

before. My longings after God and holiness, were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity, appeared exceeding amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete Christian; and conformed to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure, sweet and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should *be* more holy, and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness, than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means, how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness, than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness, and conformity to Christ.

The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility and love: And it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul, seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, "I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes." It appeared to me, that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness....a *divine* beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.

While at Newyork, I was sometimes much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then; and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

On *January* 12, 1723. I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And

solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might, against the world, the flesh and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favorable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly catched at it; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favorable to the interest of religion in the world.

I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place, on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our coversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times the greatest delight in the holy scriptures, of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained

in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

I came away from Newyork in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from Newyork to Weathersfield, by water, and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge; and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge, on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind, as when at Newyork; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at Newyork. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my Diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fullness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises will never cease, but will last to all eternity!....I continued much in the same frame, in the general, as when at Newyork, till I went to Newhaven as tutor to the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to Newhaven I sunk in religion; my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

In September, 1725, I was taken ill at Newhaven, and while endeavoring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there in divine, pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning;* and when the light of day came in at the windows, it refreshed my soul from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory.

I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honor them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But, some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart, than ever I had before.

Since I came to this town,* I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections and the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on the account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in shewing mercy to whom he would shew mercy; and man's absolute dependence on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared

* Northampton.

to me, great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would in a great measure spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me, Isa. xxxii. 2. *A man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, &c.*

It has often appeared to me delightful, to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matth. xviii. 3, has often been sweet to me, *except ye be converted and become as little children, &c.* I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into, and out of Christ; to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live by faith on the son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psal. cxv. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.* And those words of Christ, Luke x. 21. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worthy of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to shew the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems at such times a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious, pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man,

and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception.....which continued as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent lifegiving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion.* It has of-

* Our author does not say, that he *had* more wickedness, and badness of heart, since his conversion, than he had before; but that he had a greater *sense*

ten appeared to me, that if God sould mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind ; of all that have been, since the beginning of the world to this time ; and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself ; I thought their expressions seemed exceeding faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination ; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, " Infinite upon infinite.....Infinite upon infinite !" When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself ; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet it seems to me, that my conviction of sin is exceeding small, and faint ; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins I thought I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

thereof. Thus a blind man may *have* his garden *full* of noxious weeds, and yet not *see* or be *sensible* of them. But should the garden be in great part cleared of these, and furnished with many beautiful and salutary plants ; and supposing the owner now to have the power of discriminating objects of sight ; in this case, he would *have* less, but would *see*, and have a *sense* of more. To which may be added, that the better the organ, and clearer the light may be, the stronger will be the *sense* excited by sin or holiness.

I have greatly longed of late, for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile selfexaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be "humbled to the dust;" that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, "to lie infinitely low before God." And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy and deceit, left in my heart.

I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and selfrighteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

Though it seems to me, that, in some respects, I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet, of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, "This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine;" and of Christ, "This is my chosen Prophet." It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Satur-

day night, (*January* 1739) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty ; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God ; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, " How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God ! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones !" I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure ; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done.

## CHAPTER III.

### *His general Deportment, particularly while at Northampton.*

IN the first chapter of these Memoirs, we have seen that Mr. Edwards, having taken his Master's degree, was very soon invited to be tutor of that college where he received his education, and which conferred upon him that degree ; a clear proof, that the managers had a high opinion of his talents and qualifications, when only in the twentyfirst year of his age. It must be owned, that this was an engagement of great consequence for so young a man ; especially, considering that no small portion of his time had been devoted to ministerial occupations, and the requisite preparatory studies which relate exclusively to that important business. But the strength of his mind overcame difficulties, which to the generality of students appear insuperable. It must be allowed, indeed, that our author was not in the highest class of *learned* men ; for his time, his means, and his duties, did not allow of such an attainment. We should recollect, however, what Mr. Locke some where very properly observes, that though men of much

reading "are greatly *learned*, yet they may be but little *knowing*." In some situations and circumstances, he might have been a great linguist, a profound mathematician, a distinguished natural philosopher; but, (without any designed reflection on those who excel in these, or any other branches of literature and science) he was far more happily employed, both for himself and others. In fact, he has given proofs of a mind so uncommonly vigorous and enlightened, that it is rather a matter of joy it was not engrossed by studies, which would have rendered him only the admiration of a few, but prevented him from producing those works which are of universal importance, and in which he appears as the instructor of all. He had, in short, the best and sublimest kind of knowledge, without being too much encumbered with what was but little compatible with his calling.

We have also seen that Mr. Edwards resigned his tutorship at Yale College, when he had been there, in that capacity, a little more than two years, in consequence of an invitation from Northampton, in Massachusetts, in order to assist the aged and venerable Mr. Stoddard. In the present chapter we propose to detail his general manner of life more particularly while at this place; which, in connexion with the uncommon revival of religion there, of which he was the happy and honored instrument, is a very interesting period of his life.

He who enters into the true spirit of our author's writings, and especially of the extracts we have given from his private papers, cannot question that he made conscience of private devotion; but, as he made a secret of such exercises, nothing can be said of them but what his papers discover, and what may be fairly inferred from circumstances. It appears, by his Diary, that in his youth he determined to attend secret prayer more than twice a day, when circumstances would allow; and there is much evidence that he was frequent and punctual in that duty, often kept days of fasting and prayer, and set apart portions of time for devout meditations on spiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious exercises in retirement.

This constant, solemn converse with God in these exercises, made his face, as it were, to shine before others. His appearance, his countenance, words and whole demeanor, though without any thing of affected grimace, or sour austerity, were attended with a seriousness, gravity, and solemnity, which were the genuine indication of a deep, abiding sense of divine things on his mind, and of living constantly in the fear of God.

Agreeably to his Resolutions, he was very careful and abstemious in eating and drinking; as doubtless it was necessary for so great a student, and a person of so delicate a make as he was, in order to be comfortable and useful. When he had, by careful observation, found what kind, and what quantity of diet best suited his consitution, and rendered him most fit to pursue his work, he was very strict and exact in complying with it. In this respect he *lived by rule*; and herein he constantly practised great selfdenial; which he also did in his constant early rising, in order to redeem time for study. He accustomed himself to rise at four, or between four and five, in the morning.

Though he was of a tender constitution, yet few students are capable of more close application, or for more hours in a day, than he was. He commonly spent thirteen hours, every day, in his study. His most usual diversion, in summer, was riding on horseback and walking. He would commonly, unless diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner to some lonely grove, where he would dismount and walk a while. At which times he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that might be suggested, and which promised some light on any important subject. In the winter, he was wont, almost daily to take an axe, and chop wood moderately, for the space of half an hour or more.

He had an uncommon thirst for knowledge, in the pursuit of which he spared no cost nor pains. He read all the books, especially books of divinity, that he could come at, from which he could hope to get any help, in his pursuit of knowledge. And in this, he did not confine himself to authors of any particular sect or denomination; but even took much

pains to come at the books of the most noted writers who advanced a scheme of divinity most contrary to his own principles. But he studied the Bible more than all other books, and more than most other divines do. His uncommon acquaintance with the Bible appears in his sermons, and in most of his publications; and his great pains in studying it are manifest in his manuscript notes upon it; of which a more particular account will be given hereafter. He took his religious principles from the Bible, and not from any human system or body of divinity. Though his principles were *Calvinistic*, yet he called no man Father. He thought and judged for himself, and was truly very much of an original. Reading was not the only method he took to improve his mind; he was much given to writing, without which, probably, no student can make improvements to the best advantage. Agreeably to Resolution 11th, he applied himself, with all his might, to find out the truth; he searched for understanding and knowledge as for silver, and digged for it as for hid treasures. Every thought, on any subject, which appeared to him worth pursuing and preserving, he pursued as far as he then could, with a pen in his hand. Thus he was all his days, like the busy bee, collecting from every opening flower, and storing up a stock of knowledge, which was indeed sweet to him, as the honey and the honeycomb. And, as he advanced in years and in knowledge, his pen was more and more employed, and his manuscripts grew much faster on his hands.

He was thought by some, who had but a slight acquaintance with him, to be stiff and unsociable; but this was owing to want of better acquaintance. He was not a man of many words indeed, and was somewhat reserved among strangers, and those on whose candor and friendship he did not know he could rely. And this was probably owing to two things. First, the strict guard he set over his tongue from his youth, which appears by his Resolutions, taking great care never to use it in any way that might prove mischievous to any; never to *sin with his tongue*; nor to employ it in idle, trivial, and impertinent talk, which generally makes up a great part of the conversation of those who are full of words in all compa-

nies. He was sensible that, in the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin; and therefore refrained his lips, and habituated himself to *think* before he *spoke*, and to propose some good end even in all his words; which led him to be, above others, conformable to an apostolic precept, *slow to speak*. Secondly, this was in part the effect of his bodily constitution. He possessed but a comparatively small stock of animal life; his spirits were low, and he had not strength of lungs to spare, that would be necessary in order to make him what might be called an affable, facetious gentleman. They who have a great flow of animal spirits, and so can speak with less expense than others, may doubtless lawfully practise free conversation in all companies for a lower end, e. g. to please, or to render themselves acceptable. But not so, he who has not such a stock; it becomes *him* to reserve what he has, for higher and more important service. Besides, the want of animal spirits lays a man under a *natural* inability of exercising that freedom of conversation, which those of more life naturally glide into; and the greatest degree of a sociable disposition, humility and benevolence, will not remove this obstacle.

He was not forward to enter into any dispute among strangers, and in companies where there might be persons of different sentiments; being sensible, that such disputes are generally unprofitable, and often sinful, and of bad consequence. He thought he could dispute to the best advantage with his pen; yet he was always free to give his sentiments on any subject proposed to him, and to remove any difficulties or objections offered by way of inquiry, as lying in the way of what he looked upon to be the truth. But how groundless the imputation of *stiff* and *unsociable* was, his known and tried friends best knew. They always found him easy of access, kind and condescending; and though not talkative, yet affable and free. Among such, whose candor and friendship he had experienced, he threw off reserve, and was quite patient of contradiction, while the utmost opposition was made to his sentiments, that could be by any plausible arguments or objections. And indeed, he was, on all occasions, quite sociable and free with all who had any special business with him.

In his family, he practised that conscientious exactness which was conspicuous in all his ways. He maintained a great esteem and regard for his amiable and excellent consort. Much of the tender and kind was expressed in his conversation with her, and conduct towards her. He was wont frequently to converse freely with her on matters of religion; and he used commonly to pray with her in his study, at least once a day, unless something extraordinary prevented. The time for this, commonly was just before going to bed, after prayers in the family. As he rose very early himself, he was wont to have his family up betimes in the morning; after which, before they entered on the business of the day, he attended on family prayers: When a chapter in the Bible was read, commonly by candle light in the winter; upon which he asked his children questions according to their age and capacity; and took occasion to explain some passages in it, or enforce any duty recommended, &c. as he thought most proper.

He was thorough in the government of his children; and, as a consequence of this, they reverenced, esteemed and loved him. He took special care to begin his government of them in good time. When they first discovered any considerable degree of selfwill and stubbornness, he would attend to them till he had thoroughly subdued them and brought them to submit. Such prudent discipline, exercised with the greatest calmness, being repeated once or twice, was generally sufficient for that child; and effectually established his parental authority, and produced a cheerful obedience ever after.

He kept a watchful eye over his children, that he might admonish them of the *first* wrong step, and direct them in the right way. He took opportunities to converse with them in his study, singly and closely, about their souls' concerns; and to give them warning, exhortation, and direction, as he saw need. He took much pains to instruct them in the principles of religion; in which he made use of the *Assembly's Shorter Catechism*; not merely by taking care that they learned it by heart; but by leading them into an understanding of the doctrines therein taught, by asking them questions on each an-

swer, and explaining it to them. His usual time to attend to this was on the evening before the Sabbath. And, as he believed that the Sabbath, or holy time, began at sunset the evening before the day, he ordered his family to finish all their secular business by that time, or before; when all were called together, a psalm was sung, and prayer made as an introduction to the sanctification of the Sabbath. This care and exactness effectually prevented that intruding on holy time, by attending to secular business, which is too common even in families where the evening before the Sabbath is pretended to be observed.

He was a great enemy to young people's unseasonably associating together for vain amusements, which he regarded as a dangerous step towards corrupting and bringing them to ruin. And he thought the excuse many parents make for tolerating their children in it, (viz. that it is the custom, and others' children practise it, which renders it difficult, and even impossible to restrain theirs) was insufficient and frivolous; and manifested a great degree of stupidity, on supposition the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their souls. And when his children grew up, he found no difficulty in restraining them from this pernicious practice; but they cheerfully complied with the will of their parents. He allowed none of his children to be from home after nine o'clock at night, when they went abroad to see their friends and companions; neither were they allowed to sit up much after that time, in his own house, when any came to make them a visit. If any gentleman desired acquaintance with his daughters, after handsomely introducing himself, by properly consulting the parents, he was allowed all proper opportunity for it; but must not intrude on the proper hours of rest and sleep, nor the religion and order of the family.

He had a strict and inviolable regard to justice in all his dealings with his neighbors, and was very careful to provide things honest in the sight of all men; so that scarcely a man had any dealings with him, that was not satisfied of his uprightness. He appeared to have a sacred regard to truth in his words, both in promises and narrations, agreeable to his

Resolutions. This doubtless was one reason why he was not so full of words as many are. No man feared to rely on his veracity.

He was cautious in choosing his *intimate friends*, and therefore had not many that might properly be called such; but to them he shewed himself friendly in a peculiar manner. He was indeed a faithful friend, and able above most others to keep a secret. To them he discovered himself more than to others, led them into his views and ends, and to his conduct, in particular instances: By which they had abundant evidence that he well understood human nature; and that his general reservedness, and many particular instances of his conduct, which a stranger might impute to ignorance of men, were really owing to his uncommon knowledge of mankind.

His conversation with his friends was always profitable. He was not wont to spend his time with them in scandal and backbiting, or in foolish jesting, idle chat, and telling stories: But his mouth was that of the just, which bringeth forth wisdom, and whose lips dispense knowledge. His tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, while he conversed about important, heavenly, divine things, which his heart was so full of, in such a natural and free manner, as to be most entertaining and instructive; so that none of his friends could enjoy his company without instruction and profit, unless it was by their own fault.

His great benevolence to mankind discovered itself, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he shewed to the poor and distressed. He was much in recommending charity, both in his public discourses and private conversation. He often declared it to be his opinion, that professed Christians in these days are greatly deficient in this duty; and much more so than in most other parts of external Christianity. He often observed how much this is spoken of, recommended and encouraged in the holy scripture, especially in the New Testament. And it was his opinion that every particular church ought, by frequent and liberal contributions, to maintain a public stock, that might be ready for the poor and necessitous members of that church; and that the principal

business of deacons is to take care of the poor in the faithful and judicious distribution and improvement of the church's temporals, lodged in their hands. And he did not content himself with recommending charity to others, but practised it much himself. He was forward to give on all public occasions of charity, though when it could properly be done, he always concealed the sum given. And some instances of his giving more privately have accidentally come to the knowledge of others, in which his liberality appeared in a very extraordinary degree. One of the instances was this; upon his hearing that a poor obscure man, whom he never saw, or any of his kindred, was by an extraordinary bodily disorder brought to great straits; he, unasked, gave a considerable sum to a friend to be delivered to the distressed person; having first required a promise of him, that he would let neither the person who was the object of his charity, nor any one else know by whom it was given. This may serve both as an instance of his extraordinary charity, and of his great care to conceal it.*

Mr. Edwards had the character of a *good preacher*, almost beyond any minister in America. His eminence as a preacher seems to have been owing to the following things:

*First*, The great pains he took in composing his sermons, especially in the first part of his life. As by his early rising and constant attention to study, he had more time than most others, so he spent more time in making his sermons. He wrote most of them in full, for near twenty years after he first began to preach; though he did not wholly confine himself to his paper in delivering them.

*Secondly*, His great acquaintance with divinity, and knowledge of the Bible. His extensive knowledge and great clearness of thought, enabled him to handle every subject with great judgment and propriety, and to bring out of his treasure things new and old. Every subject he handled was instruct-

* As both the giver, and the object of his charity are dead, and all the ends of the proposed secrecy are answered; it is thought not inconsistent with the abovementioned promise, to make known the fact, as it is here related.

ive, plain, entertaining and profitable; which was much owing to his being master of the subject, and his great skill to treat it in a most natural, easy and profitable manner. None of his composures were dry speculations, unmeaning harangues, or words without ideas. When he dwelt on those truths which are much controverted and opposed by many, which was often the case, he would set them in such a natural and easy light, and every sentiment from step to step, would drop from his lips, attended with such clear and striking evidence, both from scripture and reason, as even to force the assent of every attentive hearer.

*Thirdly*, His excellency as a preacher was very much the effect of his great acquaintance with his own heart, his inward sense and high relish of divine truths, and experimental religion. This gave him a great insight into human nature: He knew much what was in man, both the saint and the sinner. This helped him to be skillful, to lay truth before the mind so as not only to convince the judgment, but also to touch the heart and conscience; and enabled him to speak out of the abundance of his heart what he knew, and testify what he had seen and felt. This gave him a taste and discernment, without which he could not have been able to fill his sermons, as he did, with such striking, affecting sentiments, all suited to move, and to rectify the heart of the hearer. His sermons were well arranged, not usually long, and commonly a large part taken up in the improvement; which was closely connected with the subject, and consisted in sentiments naturally flowing from it. But no description of his sermons will give the reader the idea of them which they had who sat under his preaching.

His appearance in the pulpit was graceful, and his delivery easy, natural, and very solemn. He had not a strong, loud voice; but appeared with such gravity, and solemnity, and spake with such distinctness, clearness and precision; his words were so full of ideas, set in such a plain and striking light, that few speakers have been so able to command the attention of an audience. His words often discovered a great

degree of inward fervor, without much noise or gesture, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers.

Though, he was wont to read what he delivered; he was far from thinking this the best way of preaching in general, and looked upon his using notes so much as he did, a defect and infirmity. And in the latter part of his life he was inclined to think it had been better, if he had never accustomed himself to use his notes at all. It appeared to him that preaching wholly without notes, agreeably to the custom in most Protestant countries, and what seems evidently to have been the manner of the apostles and primitive ministers of the gospel, was the most natural way; and had the greatest tendency, on the whole, to answer the end of preaching: And supposed that none who had talents equal to the work of the ministry, was incapable of speaking *memoriter*, if he took suitable pains for this attainment from his youth. He would have the young preacher write his sermons, at least most of them, out at large; and instead of reading them to his hearers, take pains to commit them to memory. Which, though it would require a great deal of labor at first, yet would soon become easier by use, and help him to speak more correctly and freely, and be of great service to him all his days.*

* Different preachers, like all other public speakers, are possessed of exceedingly different gifts; and therefore one plan, however excellent on the whole, cannot be adopted advantageously by all. In one, clearness of understanding and correctness of *judgment* are most prominent; in another, a lively and fertile *imagination* prevails; and a third excels in strength of *memory*. Some have a greater facility of expression at leisure, by the pen; and others experience more freedom when their senses and feelings are roused by their appearance in public. The man who excels in a sound *judgment*, seldom possesses a lively imagination; he therefore should write the more, with a view to give *animation* to his compositions. He should secure in his notes pertinent quotations of scripture, apt comparisons, scripture allusions, and historic facts. The preacher, whose *fancy* is active and excursive, should labor to secure a well digested *plan*, argumentatively just and naturally connected. This will prevent his running into a wordy, declamatory strain....As to *memory*, there are two sorts, the verbal, and the scientific or systematic. He who has the former, may soon preach *memoriter*;....after writing *all*, or without writing *any*. But let him ever watch, lest he enter into the temptation of plagiary; his quoting, how-

His prayers were indeed *extempore*. He was the farthest from any appearance of a form, as to his words and manner of expression, of almost any man. He was quite singular and inimitable in this, by any who have not a spirit of real and undissembled devotion; yet he always expressed himself with decency and propriety. He appeared to have much of the grace and spirit of prayer; to pray with the spirit and with the understanding; and he performed this part of duty much to the acceptance and edification of those who joined with him. He was not wont, in ordinary cases, to be long in his prayers: An error which he observed was often hurtful to public and social prayer, as it tends rather to damp than promote true devotion.

He gave himself altogether to the work of the ministry, and entangled not himself with the affairs of this life. He left the particular oversight and direction of the temporal concerns of his family, almost entirely to Mrs. Edwards. He was less acquainted with most of his temporal affairs than many of his neighbors, and seldom knew when, and by whom his forage for winter was gathered in, or how many milk kine he had, or whence his table was furnished, &c.

He did not make it his custom to visit his people in their own houses, unless he was sent for by the sick; or he heard that they were under some special affliction. Instead of visiting from house to house, he used to preach frequently at private meetings in particular neighborhoods; and often call the young people and children to his own house, when he used to pray with them, and treat with them in a manner suited to their years and circumstances; and he catechised the children in public every Sabbath in the summer. And he used sometimes to propose questions to particular young

ever, long passages from the holy scriptures, when apposite, will be always acceptable; and occasionally, when avowed, the words of other authors. The scientific memory should guard against too much analysis in a sermon, and often choose for the subject of discussion historical passages, or any others which are best treated in the way of observation; which in time will effectually counteract the opposite tendency to explain what is clear, and to analyse without profit.

persons in writing, for them to answer after a proper time given them to prepare. In putting out these questions, he endeavored to suit them to the age, genius, and abilities of those to whom they were given. His questions were generally such as required but a short answer; and yet could not be answered without a particular knowledge of some historical part of the scripture; and therefore led, and even obliged persons to study the Bible.

He did not neglect visiting his people from house to house because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one part of the work of a gospel minister; but because he supposed that ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own talents and circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope thereby to promote the great ends of the ministry. He observed, that some had a talent for entertaining and profiting by occasional visits among their people. He supposed such had a call to spend a great deal of their time in visiting their people; but he looked on his own talents to be quite otherwise. He was not able to enter into a free conversation with every person he met, and in an easy manner turn it to what topic he pleased, without the help of others, and, it may be, against their inclination. He therefore found that his visits of this kind must be in a great degree unprofitable. It appeared to him, that he could do the greatest good to souls, and most promote the interest of Christ by preaching and writing, and conversing with persons under religious impressions in his study; whither he encouraged all such to repair; where they might be sure, in ordinary cases, to find him, and to be allowed easy access to him; and where they were treated with all desirable tenderness, kindness, and familiarity.

In times, therefore, of the revival of religion among his people, his study was thronged with persons who came to lay open their spiritual concerns to him, and seek his advice and direction. These he received with great freedom and pleasure, and there he had the best opportunity to deal in the most particular manner with each one. He was a skilful guide to souls under spiritual difficulties; and was therefore sought un-

to, not only by his own people, but by many who lived scores of miles off. He became such, partly by his own experimental acquaintance with divine things, and unwearied study of God's word, and partly by his having so much concern with souls under spiritual troubles; for he had not been settled in the work of the ministry many years before the Spirit of God was wonderfully poured out on his people, by which a great concern about their souls became almost universal, and a great number were hopefully the subjects of saving conversion.

There was a very remarkable outpouring of God's Holy Spirit in this part of America, in the years 1740 and 1741, and in which Northampton largely partook. Mr. Edwards, at this time, had to deal not only with his own people, but with multitudes of others. The report that the same things were at Northampton some years before, and Mr. Edwards's fame for knowledge, piety, and great acquaintance with experimental religion, naturally led both ministers and people, from almost all parts of Newengland, to look to him for direction and assistance, in this extraordinary time. Being earnestly solicited by ministers and people to come and preach among them, he went to many; though he was not able to gratify all who desired him; and his preaching was attended with great success.

As many of the ministers and people in Newengland had been unacquainted with such things, they were greatly exposed to *run wild*, and (by the subtle temptations of the devil) actually did go into great extremes, both as opposers and friends to the work of God. Mr. Edwards was greatly helpful by his direction and assistance against the two opposite extremes, in conversation, preaching and writing. His publications on this occasion were of great and extensive service; especially a sermon preached at Newhaven, Sept. 10th, 1741, on *The distinguishing marks of a work of the Spirit of God, &c....*his *Thoughts concerning the present revival of religion in Newengland, &c.* and his *Treatise on religious affections.* All which might be justly considered by the church of Christ as a wise and friendly voice behind them saying, "This is the way, walk therein;" especially the last mentioned Treat-

ise, which has been esteemed by many the best that has been written on that subject; setting the distinction between true and false religion in the most clear and striking light. And to the same purpose is *The Life of the* Rev. David Brainerd, *with reflections and observations;* published by Mr. Edwards in 1749. Mr. Edwards was, what some would call, a rigid *Calvinist.* Those doctrines of Calvinism which have been most objected against, and given the greatest offence, appeared to him scriptural, reasonable and important; and he thought that to give them up, was in effect to give up all. He therefore looked upon those who, calling themselves Calvinists, were for softening down the truth, that they might conform it more to the taste of those who are most disposed to object against it, were really betraying the cause they pretended to espouse; and were paving the way not only to Arminianism, but to Deism. For if these doctrines, were relinquished, he did not see, where a man could set his foot down, with consistency short of Deism, or even Atheism itself; or rather universal Scepticism,....He judged that nothing was wanting, but to have these doctrines *properly stated,* and *judiciously defended,* in order to their appearing most agreeable to reason and common sense, as well as doctrines of revelation; and that this therefore was the only effectual method to convince, or silence and put to shame the opposers of them. All will be able to satisfy themselves of the truth of this by reading his works; and especially his books on *The Freedom of the Will,* and *Original Sin.*

In this view of things, he thought it of importance that ministers should be very critical in examining candidates for the ministry, with respect to their *principles,* as well as their religious dispositions and morals. And on this account he met with considerable difficulty and opposition in some instances. His opinion was, that an erroneous or unfaithful minister was likely to do more hurt than good to the church of Christ; and therefore he could not have any hand in introducing a man into the ministry, unless he appeared *sound in the faith,* and manifested, to the judgment of charity, a *disposition to be faithful.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### *His Dismission from Northampton, with the Occasion and Circumstances of it.*

WHATEVER belongs to man, or more correctly, whatever is properly his *own*, bears the mark of mutability. Mr. Edwards's labors at Northampton were crowned, at different periods of his ministry there, with eminent success. But a root of bitterness sprung up, and many were defiled. The transactions contained in this chapter, though unpleasant, may afford, to a serious and reflecting mind, much instruction. If that people were more depraved than Christian churches in common, after enjoying for so long a period the stated instructions and prayers of so eminent a pastor; how great the depravity of human nature, to be capable of such ingratitude and such a reverse! Thus it was with Ephraim of old; "When I would," saith God, "have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness (or, the evils) of Samaria." But if the people in question were no more depraved than ourselves, let us learn caution, and beware of unreasonable and inordinate attachment to customs....let us contemplate with proper emotions the instability of all human affairs....the folly and danger of trusting in man....and remember that we depend on God for the preservation of the closest friendships....and that the best ministers, without the continued supply of the Holy Spirit on the minds of their people, have no sure interest in their affections; people, to whom they have been most useful, and who were long most attached to them.... Human nature has occasionally shewn itself in every age to be the same. After the most extraordinary manifestation of divine power and goodness, "The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And after the most awful and impressive instructions, the Lord had to say to Moses, "Go, get thee down;

for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves."

For many years, Mr. Edwards was very happy in the love and esteem of his people, and there was during that period the greatest prospect of his living and dying so. Indeed he was almost the last minster in all Newengland that would have been thought likely to be opposed by his people. But the event proved, how incompetent *we* are to decipher those consequences which depend on human volitions....In the year 1744, about six years before the final rupture, Mr. Edwards was informed that some young persons in town who were members of the church, had books in their possession which they employed to promote lascivious and obscene discourse among the young people. Upon inquiry, a number of persons testified, that they had heard one and another, from time to time, talk obscenely; as what they were led to by reading a book or books, which they had among them. Mr. Edwards thought the brethren of the church ought to look into the matter; and in order to introduce it, he preached a sermon from Heb. xii. 15, 16. "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled: Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person as Esau, &c." After sermon, he desired the brethren of the church to stay, and told them what information he had got; and proposed, whether they thought proper to take any measures to examine into the matter. They with one consent, and much zeal, manifested it to be their opinion, that it ought to be inquired into; and proceeded to choose a number of men, to assist their pastor in examining into the affair. Upon which Mr. Edwards appointed the time for their meeting at his house, and then read a catalogue of the names of young persons, whom he desired to come to his house at the same time. Some were the accused, and some witnesses; but it was not then declared of which number any particular person was.

When the names were published, it appeared that there were but few of the considerable families in the town, to which some of the persons named did not belong, or were

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[illegible]son who rejected Christ in [illegible],
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[illegible] sentiments were known [illegible]
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nearly related. Whether this was the occasion of the alteration or not, before the day appointed came, however, a great number of heads of families altered their minds, and declared, that they did not think proper to proceed as they had done; that their children should not be called to an account in such a way, &c. The town was suddenly all in a blaze. This strengthened the hands of the accused, some refused to appear, and others who did appear behaved with a great degree of insolence, and contempt of the authority of the church. And little or nothing could be done further in the affair.

This was the occasion of weakening Mr. Edwards's hands in the work of the ministry, especially among the young people, with whom by this means he greatly lost his influence. It doubtless laid a foundation, and will help to account for the surprising events which will be related. He certainly had no great visible success after this; the influences of God's Holy Spirit were greatly withheld, and security and carnality much increased.*

Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Edwards's grandfather and predecessor, was of the opinion, that unconverted persons, considered as such, had a right in the sight of God, or by his appointment, to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; that therefore it was their *duty* to come to that ordinance, though they knew they had no true goodness, or gospel holiness. He maintained, that visible Christianity does not consist in a profession or appearance of that wherein true holiness or real Christianity consists: That therefore, the profession which persons make in order to be received as visible members of Christ's church, ought not to be such as to express or imply a real compliance with, or consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, or a hearty embracing of the gospel. He formed a

* What an awful warning to all professors, and especially to young people! Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Little do the giddy and the gay think how their levities operate, and what seeds of distress and sorrow they are sowing for themselves and others. Woe unto you that *thus* laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep! How desirable it should be *penetentially* here, and not *despairingly* hereafter!

short profession for persons to make, in order to be admitted into the church, answerable to this principle; and accordingly persons were admitted into the church, and to the sacrament, on those terms. Mr. Stoddard's principle at first made a great noise in the country; and he was opposed, as introducing something contrary to the principles and practice of almost all the churches in Newengland: And the matter was publicly controverted between him and Dr. Increase Mather of Boston. However, through Mr. Stoddard's great influence over the people at Northampton, it was introduced there, though not without opposition; by degrees it spread very much among ministers and people in that county, and in other parts of Newengland. Mr. Edwards had some hesitation about this matter when he first settled at Northampton, but did not receive such a degree of conviction, as to prevent his adopting it with a good conscience, for some years. But at length his doubts increased, which put him upon examining it thoroughly, by searching the scripture, and reading such books as were written on the subject. The result was a full conviction that it was wrong, and that he could not retain the practice with a good conscience. He was fully convinced, that to be a *visible Christian* was to put on the visibility or appearance of a real Christian; that the profession of Christianity was a profession of that wherein real Christianity consists; and therefore that no person who rejected Christ in his heart, could make such a profession consistent with truth. And as the ordinance of the Lord's supper was instituted for none but *visible* professing Christians, none but those who are *real* Christians have a right in the sight of God to come to that ordinance: And consequently that none ought to be admitted thereto, who do not make a profession of real Christianity, and so be received in a judgment of charity as true friends to Jesus Christ.

When Mr. Edwards's sentiments were known, (in the spring of the year 1744) it gave great offence, and the town was put into a great ferment: And before he was heard in his own defence, or it was known by many what his principles were, the general cry was to have him dismissed, as what

alone would satisfy them. This was evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, as they neglected the most proper means of understanding the matter in dispute, and persisted in a refusal to attend to what Mr. Edwards had to say in defence of his principles. From beginning to end, they opposed the measures which had the best tendency to compromise and heal the difficulty; and with much zeal pursued those which were calculated to make a separation certain and speedy. He thought of preaching on the subject, that they might know what were his sentiments, and the grounds of them, (of both which he was sensible that most of them were quite ignorant) before they took any step for a separation..... But that he might do nothing to increase the tumult, he first proposed the thing to the church's standing committee; supposing that if he entered on the subject publicly with their consent, it would prevent the ill consequences which otherwise he feared would follow. But the most of them strenuously opposed it. Upon which he gave it over for the present, as what in such circumstances would rather blow up the fire to a greater height, than answer the good ends proposed.

Mr. Edwards was sensible that his principles were not understood, but misrepresented through the country; and finding that his people were then too warm calmly to attend to the matter in controversy, he proposed to print what he had to say on the point; as this seemed to be the only way left him to have a fair hearing. Accordingly his people consented to put off calling a council, till what he should write was published. But they manifested great uneasiness in waiting, before it came out of the press; and when it was published, it was read but by very few of them. Mr. Edwards being sensible of this, renewed his proposal to preach upon it, and at a meeting of the brethren of the church asked their consent in the following terms: "I desire that the brethren would manifest their consent, that I should declare the reasons of my opinion relating to full communion in the church, in lectures appointed for that end: Not as an act of authority, or as putting the power of declaring the whole counsel of God

out of my hands; but for peace' sake, and to prevent occasion of strife." This was answered in the negative. He then proposed that it should be left to a few of the neighboring ministers, whether it was not, all things considered, reasonable that he should be heard in this matter from the pulpit, before the affair should be brought to an issue. But this also passed in the negative.

However, having had the advice of the ministers and messengers of the neighboring churches, who met at Northampton to advise them under their difficulties, he proceeded to appoint a lecture in order to preach on the subject, proposing to do so weekly till he had finished what he had to say. On Monday there was a society meeting, in which a vote was passed to choose a committee to go to Mr. Edwards, and desire him not to preach lectures on the subject in controversy, according to his declaration and appointment: Accordingly, a committee of three men, chosen for this purpose, waited on him. However, Mr. Edwards thought proper to proceed according to his proposal, and consequently preached a number of sermons, till he had finished what he had to say on the subject. These lectures were very thinly attended by his own people; but great numbers of strangers from the neighboring towns attended them, so many as to make above half the congregation. This was in February and March 1750.

The calling of a decisive council to determine the matter of difference was now more particularly attended to on both sides. Mr. Edwards had before this insisted, from time to time, that they were by no means ripe for such a procedure; as they had not yet given him a fair hearing, whereby perhaps the need of such a council would be superseded. He observed, "That it was exceedingly unbecoming to manage religious affairs of the greatest importance, in a ferment and tumult, which ought to be managed, with great solemnity, deep humiliation, submission to the awful frowns of heaven, humble dependence on God, with fervent prayer and supplication to him: That therefore for them to go about such an affair as they did, would be greatly to the dishonor of God and religion; a way in which a people cannot expect a blessing."

Thus having, without effect, used all means to bring them to a calm and charitable temper, he consented that a decisive council should be called without any further delay.

But a difficulty attended the choice of a council, which was for some time insuperable. It was agreed, that the council should be mutually chosen, one half by the pastor, and the other half by the church: But the people insisted upon it, that he should be confined in his choice to the county. Mr. Edwards thought this an unreasonable restraint, as it was known that the ministers and churches in that county were almost universally against him in the controversy. He indeed did not suppose that the business of the proposed council would be to determine whether his opinion was right or not; but whether any possible way could be devised for an accommodation between pastor and people, and to use their wisdom and endeavor in order to effect it. And if they found this impracticable, they must determine, whether what ought in justice to be done had already actually been attempted, so that there was nothing further to be demanded by either of the parties concerned, before a separation should take place. And if he was dismissed by them, it would be their business to set forth to the world in what manner and for what cause he was dismissed: All which were matters of great importance to him, and required upright and impartial judges. Now considering the great prejudice a difference in religious opinions is apt to beget, and the close connexion of the point in which most of the ministers and churches in the county differed from him, with the matter to be decided, he did not think they could be reasonably looked upon so impartial judges, as that the matter ought to be wholly left to them. Besides he thought the case, being so new and extraordinary, required the ablest judges in the land. For these reasons, and some others which he offered, he insisted upon liberty to go out of the county, for those members of the proposed council in which he was to have a choice. The people strenuously and obstinately opposing him in this, at length agreed to leave the matter to a council, consisting of the ministers and messengers of the five neighboring churches; who, after they had

met twice upon it, and had the case largely debated before them, were *equally divided*, and therefore left the matter undetermined.

However, they were all agreed, that Mr. Edwards ought to have liberty to go out of the county for *some* of the council. And at the next church meeting, (the 26th of March) Mr. Edwards offered to join with them in calling a council, if they would consent that he should chuse *two* of the churches out of the county, in case the council consisted of but *ten* churches. The church however refused to comply with this at one meeting after another repeatedly; and proceeded to call a church meeting and choose a moderator, in order to act without their pastor. But, to pass by many particulars, at length, at a meeting of the church, convened by their pastor, May 3d, they voted their consent to his proposal of going out of the county for two of the churches that should be applied to. And then they proceeded to make choice of the ten ministers and churches, of which the council should consist. Accordingly the churches were applied to, and the council was convened on the 19th of June. After they had made some fruitless attempts for a composition between the pastor and church, they passed a resolution by a majority of one voice* only, to the following purpose: "That it is expedient that the pastoral relation between Mr. Edwards and his church be immediately dissolved, if the people still persist in desiring it." And it being publicly put to the people, whether they still insisted on Mr. Edwards's dismission from the pastoral office over them? A great majority, (above two hundred against twenty) voted for his dismission; and he was accordingly dismissed, June 22, 1750.

The dissenting part of the council entered their protest against this proceeding, judging that it was too much in a

* One of the churches which Mr. Edwards chose did not see fit to join the council. However, the minister of that church being at Northampton, was desired by Mr. Edwards and the church to sit in council and act, which he did. But there being no messenger from the church, the council was not full, and there was a disparity; by which means there was one vote more for an immediate dismission, than against it.

hurry, considering the past conduct and present temper of the people. And some of that part of the council who were for the separation, expressed themselves surprised at the uncommon zeal manifested by the people in their voting for a dismission; which evidenced to them, and all observing spectators, that they were far from a temper of mind becoming such a solemn and awful transaction, considered in all its circumstances.

Being thus dismissed, he preached his farewell sermon on the 1st of July, from 2 Cor. i. 14. The doctrine he observed from the words was this, "Ministers and the people that have been under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal, at the day of judgment." It it was a remarkably solemn and affecting discourse, and was published at the desire of some of the hearers. After Mr. Edwards was dismissed from Northampton, he preached there occasionally, when they had no other preacher to supply the pulpit; till at length a great uneasiness was manifested by many of the people, at his preaching there at all. Upon which the committee for supplying the pulpit, called the town together, to know their minds with respect to that matter; when they voted that it was not agreeable to their minds that he should preach among them. Accordingly, while Mr. Edwards was in the town, and they had no other minister to preach to them, they carried on public worship among themselves.

Every one must be sensible that this was a great trial to Mr. Edwards. He had been nearly twentyfour years among that people; and his labors had been, to all appearance, from time to time greatly blessed among them: And a great number looked on him as their spiritual father, who had been the happy instrument of turning them from darkness to light, and plucking them as brands out of the burning. And they had from time to time professed that they looked upon it as one of their greatest privileges to have such a minister, and manifested their great love and esteem of him, to such a degree, that, (as St. Paul says of the Galatians) "if it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him." And they had a great inter-

est in *his* affection: He had borne them on his heart, and carried them in his bosom for many years; exercising a tender concern and love for them: For their good he was always writing, contriving, laboring; for them he had poured out ten thousand fervent prayers; in their good he had rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil; and they were dear to him above any other people under heaven. Now to have *this people* turn against him, and thrust him out from among them, stopping their ears, and running upon him with furious zeal, not allowing him to defend himself by giving him a fair hearing; and even refusing so much as to hear him preach; many of them surmising and publicly speaking many ill things as to his ends and designs! Surely this must come very near to him, and try his spirit. The words of the psalmist seem applicable to this case, "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him. But it was THOU....my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

Let us therefore, now *behold the man!*....The calm sedateness of his mind; his meekness and humility in great and violent opposition, and injurious treatment; his resolution and steady conduct through all this dark and terrible storm, were truly wonderful, and cannot be set in so beautiful and affecting a light by any description, as they appeared in to his friends, who were eye witnesses.

Mr. Edwards had a numerous and chargeable family, and little or no income, exclusive of his salary; and, considering how far he was advanced in years; the general disposition of people, who want a minister, to prefer a young man who has never been settled, to one who has been dismissed from his people; and what misrepresentations were made of his principles through the country, it looked to him not at all probable that he should ever have opportunity to be settled again in the work of the ministry, if he was dismissed from Northampton: And he was not inclined or able to take any other course, or go into any other business to get a living:

So that beggary as well as disgrace stared him full in the face, if he persisted in his principles. When he was fixed in his principles, and before they were publicly known, he told some of his friends, that if he discovered and persisted in them, it would most likely issue in his dismission and disgrace; and the ruin of himself and family, as to their *temporal* interests. He therefore first sat down and counted the cost, and deliberately took up the cross, when it was set before him in its full weight and magnitude; and in direct opposition to all *worldly* views and motives. And therefore his conduct in these circumstances, was a remarkable exercise and discovery of his conscientiousness; and his readiness to deny himself, and forsake all that he had, to follow Christ. A man must have a considerable degree of the spirit of a martyr, to go on with the steadfastness and resolution with which he did. He ventured wherever truth and duty appeared to lead him, unmoved at the threatening dangers on every side.

However, God did not forsake him. As he gave him those inward supports by which he was able in patience to possess his soul, and courageously row on in the storm, in the face of boisterous winds beating hard upon him, and in the midst of gaping waves threatening to swallow him up; so he soon appeared for him in his providence, even beyond all his expectations. His correspondents and other friends in Scotland, hearing of his dismission, and fearing it might be the means of bringing him into worldly straits, generously contributed a considerable sum, and sent it over to him. And God did not leave him without tender, valuable friends at Northampton. For a small number of his people who opposed his dismission from the beginning, and some who acted on neither side, but after his dismission adhered to him, under the influence of their great esteem and love of Mr. Edwards, were willing, and thought themselves able to maintain him: And insisted upon it that it was his duty to stay among them, as a distinct and separate congregation from the body of the town, who had rejected him.

Mr. Edwards could not see it to be his duty to stay among them, as this would probably be a means of perpetuating an unhappy division in the town; and there was to him no prospect of doing the good there, which would counterbalance the evil. However, that he might do all he could to satisfy his tender and afflicted friends; he consented to ask the advice of an ecclesiastical council. Accordingly, a council was called, and met at Northampton on the 15th of May, 1751. The town on this occasion was put into a great tumult. They who were active in Mr. Edwards's dismission supposed, though without any good ground, that he was contriving with his friends, again to introduce himself at Northampton. They drew up a remonstrance against their proceedings, and laid it before the council, (though they would not acknowledge them to be an ecclesiastical council) containing many heavy, though groundless insinuations and charges against Mr. Edwards, and bitter accusations of the party who had adhered to him: But refused to appear and support any of their charges, or so much as to give the gentlemen of the council any opportunity to confer with them about the affair depending, though it was diligently sought. The council having heard what Mr. Edwards and they who adhered to him had to say, advised, agreeably to Mr. Edwards's judgment, that he should leave Northampton, and accept of the mission to which he was invited at Stockbridge; of which a more particular account will be given.

Many other facts relative to this sorrowful and surprising affair (the most so doubtless of any of the kind, that ever happened in Newengland; and perhaps, in any part of the Christian world) might be related; but as this more general history of it may be sufficient to answer the ends proposed, viz. to rectify some gross misrepresentations that have been made of the matter, and discover the great trial Mr. Edwards had herein, it is thought best to suppress other particulars. As a proper close to this melancholy story; and to confirm, and further illustrate what has been related, the following letter from Joseph Hawley, Esq. (a gentleman who was very active in the transactions of this whole affair, and very much a leader in it) to the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Sutton, published in a

weekly newspaper in Boston, May 19th, 1760, is here inserted.

## TO THE REV. MR. HALL OF SUTTON.

REV. SIR, *Northampton, May* 9, 1760.

I HAVE often wished that every member of the two ecclesiastical councils that formerly sat in Northampton, upon the unhappy differences between our former most worthy and Rev. pastor, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, and the church here, whereof you were a member; I say, Sir, I have often wished every one of them truly knew my real sense of my own conduct in the affairs that the one and the other of the said councils are privy to. As I have long apprehended it to be my duty not only to humble myself before God for what was unchristian and sinful in my conduct before the said councils, but also to confess my faults to *them*, and take shame to myself before them; so I have often studied with myself in what manner it was practicable for me to do it. When I understood that you, Sir, and Mr. Eaton, were to be at Cold Spring at the time of the late council, I resolved to improve the opportunity fully to open my mind there to you and him thereon; and thought that probably some method might be then thought of in which my reflections on myself, touching the matters above hinted at, might be communicated to most if not all the gentlemen aforesaid, who did not reside in this county. But you know, Sir, how difficult it was for us to converse together by ourselves, when at Cold Spring, without giving umbrage to that people; I therefore proposed writing to you upon the matters which I had then opportunity only most summarily to suggest; which you, sir, signified would be agreeable to you. I therefore now undertake what I then proposed, in which I humbly ask the divine aid; and that I may be made most freely willing fully to confess my sin and guilt to you and the world in those instances which I have reason to suppose fell under your notice, as they were public and notorious transactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you, Sir, and all oth-

ers who had knowledge thereof, had just cause to be offended at me.

And in the first place, Sir, I apprehend that, with the church and people of Northampton, I sinned and erred exceedingly in consenting and laboring that there should be so early a dismission of Mr. Edwards from his pastoral relation to us, even upon the supposition that he was really in a mistake in the disputed point: Not only because the dispute was upon matters so very disputable in themselves, and at the greatest remove from fundamental, but because Mr. Edwards so long had approved himself a most faithful and painful pastor to the said church. He also changed his sentiments in that point, wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth; and had made known his sentiments with great moderation, and upon great deliberation, against all worldly motives, from mere fidelity to his great Master, and a tender regard to the souls of his flock, as we had the highest reason to judge. These considerations now seem to me sufficient; and would (if we had been of a right spirit) have greatly endeared him to his people, and made us to the last degree reluctant to part with him, and disposed us to the exercise of the greatest candor, gentleness and moderation. How much of the reverse whereof appeared in us, I need not tell you, Sir, who were an eye witness of our temper and conduct.

And although it does not become me to pronounce decisively on a point so disputable as what was then in dispute; yet I beg leave to say, that I really apprehend that it is of the highest moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular, most solicitously to enquire, whether, like the Pharisees and lawyers in John Baptist's time, we did not reject the counsel of God against ourselves, in rejecting Mr. Edwards, and his doctrine, which was the ground of his dismission. And I humbly conceive that it highly imports us all of this church, most seriously and impartially to examine what that most worthy and able divine published, about that time, in support of the same, whereby he being dead yet speaketh. But there were three things, Sir, especially in my own particular con-

duct before the first council, which have been justly matter of great grief and much trouble to me almost ever since, viz.

In the first place, I confess, Sir, that I acted very immodestly and abusively to you, as well as injuriously to the church and myself, when, with much zeal and unbecoming assurance, I moved the council that they would interpose to silence and stop you in an address you were making one morning to the people, wherein you were, if I do not forget, briefly exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affection and harmony that had long subsisted between them and their Rev. Pastor, and the great comfort and profit which they apprehended that they had received from his ministry; for which, Sir, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and I think, that we ought, instead of opposing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulness.

Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection and reverend respect and esteem for Mr. Edwards, which he had highly merited of me, was my strenuously opposing the adjournment of the matters submitted to that council, for about two months; for which I declare myself unfeignedly sorry; and I with shame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, decisive, vehement, and very immodest manner.

But, Sir, the most criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conscious of, was my exhibiting to that council a set of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reasonableness and necessity of Mr. Edwards's dismission, in case no accommodation was then effected with mutual consent; which writing, by clear implication, contained some severe, uncharitable, and, if I remember right, groundless and slanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, expressed in bitter language. And although the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I foolishly and sinfully consented to copy it; and, as agent for the church, to read it, and deliver it to the council; which I could never have done, if I had not a wicked relish for perverse things: Which conduct of mine I confess was very sinful, and highly provoking to God;

for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.

As to the church's remonstrance, as it was called, which their committee preferred to the last of the said councils, (to all which I was consenting, and in the composing whereof I was very active, as also in bringing the church to their vote upon it;) I would, in the first place, only observe, that I do not remember any thing, in that small part of it which was plainly expressive of the expediency of Mr. Edwards's resettlement here as pastor to a part of the church, which was very exceptionable. But as to all the residue, which was much the greatest part thereof (and I am not certain that any part was wholly free) it was every where interlarded with unchristian bitterness, sarcastical, and unmannerly insinuations. It contained divers direct, grievous and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. Edwards, which I have since good reason to suppose, were all founded on jealous and uncharitable mistakes, and so were really gross slanders; also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards's adherents, and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which, if not wholly false and groundless, yet were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced, that the whole of that composure, excepting the small part thereof abovementioned, was totally unchristian, a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel, against Mr. Edwards and his particular friends, especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray I may remember it with deep abasement, and penitence all my days. Nor do I now think that the church's conduct in refusing to appear, and attend before that council to support the charges and allegations in the said remonstrance against Mr. Edwards and the said brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated by all the subtle answers that were given to the said demand; nor do I think that our conduct in that instance was capable of a defence. For it appears to me, that by making such charges against them before the said council, we necessarily so far gave that council jurisdiction;

and I own with sorrow and regret, that I zealously endeavored that the church should perseveringly refuse to appear before the said council for the purpose aforesaid; which I humbly pray God to forgive.

Another part of my conduct, Sir, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty sorrow, was my obstinate opposition to the last council's having any conference with the church; which the said council earnestly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church, as you know, finally denied. I think it discovered a great deal of pride and vain sufficiency in the church, and shewed them to be very opinionative, especially the chief sticklers, one of whom I was, and think it was running a most presumptuous risk, and acting the part of proud scorners, for us to refuse hearing, and candidly and seriously considering what that council could say or oppose to us; among whom there were divers, justly in great reputation for grace and wisdom.

In these instances, Sir, of my conduct, and in others (to which you were not privy) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, I now see that I was very much influenced by vast pride, selfsufficiency, ambition, and vanity. I appear to myself vile, and doubtless much more so to others, who are more impartial; and do in the review thereof, abhor myself, and repent sorely: And if my own heart condemns me, it behoves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater, and knoweth all things. I hereby own, Sir, that such treatment of Mr. Edwards, wherein I was so deeply concerned and active, was particularly and very aggravatedly sinful and ungrateful in me, because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as to a most able, diligent and faithful pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me, as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner.

Indeed, Sir, I must own, that by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. Edwards within the time of our most unhappy disputes with him, and especially in and about that abominable "remonstrance," I have so far symbolized with

Balaam, Ahitophel, and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I attend to the most painful similitude. And I freely confess, that on account of my conduct abovementioned, I have the greatest reason to tremble at those most solemn and awful words of our Saviour, Mat. xviii. 6. "Whoso shall offend one of these," &c. and those in Luke x. 16. "He that despiseth you," &c. and I am most sorely sensible that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord, and the persecutors of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood, blessed be God, cleanseth from all sin. On the whole, Sir, I am convinced, that I have the greatest reason to say as David, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me: Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit." Psal. li. 1....3, 9....12.

And I humbly apprehend that it greatly concerns the church of Northampton most seriously to examine, whether the many hard speeches, spoken by many particular members against their former pastor, some of which the church really countenanced, (and especially those spoken by the church as a body, in that most vile "remonstrance,") are not so odious and ungodly, as to be utterly incapable of defence; whether the said church were not guilty of a great sin in being so willing and disposed, for so slight a cause, to part with so faithful and godly a minister as Mr. Edwards was; and whether ever God will hold us guiltless till we cry to him for Christ's sake to pardon and save us from that judgment which such ungodly deeds deserve. And I most heartily wish and pray that the town and church of Northampton would serious-

ly and carefully examine whether they have not abundant cause to judge that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God; and whether those of us who were concerned in that most awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can ever more reasonably expect God's favor and blessing, till our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the Most High, and have been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ, by persecuting and vexing that just man and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust on account of it, and till we openly, in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confess the same before the world, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness of God, and do what we can to honor the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aspersions which we unjustly cast upon him; since God has been pleased to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness. Such terms I am persuaded the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myself, and this way I most solemnly propose to take myself, (if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity) that so by making free confession to God and man of my sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to myself, I may give glory to the God of Israel, and do what in me lies, to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleased to spare my life to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long.

Although I made the substance of almost all the foregoing reflections in writing, but not exactly in the same manner, to Mr. Edwards and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. Edwards's life, and before he removed from Stockbridge, and I have reason to believe that he, from his great candor and charity, heartily forgave me and prayed for me: Yet because that was not generally known, I look on myself obliged to take further steps; for while I kept silence, my bones waxed old,

&c. For all these my great sins therefore, in the first place, I humbly and most earnestly ask forgiveness of God; in the next place of the relatives and near friends of Mr. Edwards.... I also ask the forgiveness of all those who were called Mr. Edwards's adherents; and of all the members of the ecclesiastical councils above mentioned; and lastly, of all Christian people, who have had any knowledge of these matters.

I have no desire, Sir, that you should make any secret of this letter; but that you would communicate the same to whom you shall judge proper: And I purpose, if God shall give me opportunity, to procure it to be published in some one of the public newspapers; for I cannot devise any other way of making known my sentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith, and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foresee will be made thereon. Probably when it comes out, some of my acquaintance will pronounce me quite overrun with vapors; others will be furnished with matter for mirth and pleasantry; others will cursorily pass it over, as relating to matters quite stale; But some, I am persuaded, will rejoice to see me brought to a sense of my sin and duty; and I myself shall be conscious that I have done something of what the nature of the case admits, toward undoing what is, and long has been, to my greatest remorse and trouble that it was ever done.

Sir, I desire that none would entertain a thought from my having spoken respectfully of Mr. Edwards, that I am disaffected to our present pastor; for the very reverse is true; and I have a reverend esteem, real value, and hearty affection for him, and bless God, that he has, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, given us one to succeed Mr. Edwards, who, as I have reason to hope, is truly faithful.

I conclude this long letter, by heartily desiring your prayers, that my repentance of my sins abovementioned may be unfeigned and genuine, and such as God in infinite mercy, for Christ's sake, will accept; and I beg leave to subscribe myself, Sir, your real, though very unworthy friend,

and obedt. servant, JOSEPH HAWLEY.

# CHAP. V.

## *From his Mission to the Indians until his Death.*

### SECT. I.

#### *His Mission to the Indians at Stockbridge.*

IF we regard Mr. Edwards's deep acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and the influence of divine truth on his own heart; if we consider, also, his long experience in the work of the ministry, with his disposition to observe the operations of human minds and passions, and to improve such knowledge to the most profitable purposes, we may safely say, that there were but few men, if any, better qualified to conduct a mission among the Indians. But, on the other hand, it may be questioned, whether his recluse turn, his natural reserve, his contemplative habits, and the strong propensity of his mind closely to investigate abstractedly every difficult subject that presented itself, were not unfavorable traits for such a situation, however beneficial it might be for his own improvement. Mr. Edwards was qualified to shine in some departments of the seats of learning, and was afterwards called to preside over one; but when he was delegated to instruct savage Indians, there was occasion to suspect there was not a perfect suitableness in the appointment. On this, however, different persons may form different opinions; and it is our business now to give some account of this appointment.

The Indian mission at Stockbridge, a town in the western part of Massachusett's Bay, fifty miles from Northampton, being vacant by the death of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant, the honored and reverend commissioners for Indian affairs in Boston, who have the care and direction of it, applied to Mr. Edwards as the most suitable person they could think of to be entrusted with that mission. At the same time he was in-

vited by the inhabitants of Stockbridge; and being advised by the council abovementioned to accept of the invitation, he repaired to Stockbridge, and was introduced and fixed as missionary to the Indians there, by an ecclesiastical council called for that purpose, August 8th, 1751.

When Mr. Edwards first engaged in the mission, there was a hopeful prospect of its being extensively serviceable, under his care and influence; not only to that tribe of Indians which was settled at Stockbridge, but among the Six Nations, some of whom were coming to Stockbridge to settle, bringing their own, and as many of their neighbors' children as they could get, to be educated and instructed there. For this end, a house for a boarding school, which was projected by Mr. Sergeant, was erected on a tract of land appropriated to that use by the Indians at Stockbridge; where the Indian children, male and female, were to be educated, by being clothed and fed, and instructed by proper persons in useful learning. The boys were to be taught husbandry or mechanic trades, and the girls all sorts of women's work. For the encouragement of this design, some generous subscriptions were made both in England and America. The general court of the province of Massachusett's Bay did much to promote the affair, and provided lands for the Mohawks who should incline to come. And the generous Mr. Hollis, to encourage the scheme, ordered twentyfour Indian children to be educated on the same footing, wholly at his cost. Also the society in London, for propagating the gospel among the Indians in and about Newengland, directed their commissioners in Boston to do something considerable towards this design. But partly by reason of some unhappy differences that took place among those who had the chief management of this affair at Stockbridge, of which a particular account would not be proper in this place; and partly by the war breaking out between England and France, which is generally very fatal to such affairs among Indians, this hopeful prospect came to nothing.

Mr. Edwards's labors were attended with no remarkable visible success while at Stockbridge; though he performed the business of his mission to the good acceptance of the in-

habitants in general, both English and Indians, and of the commissioners, who supported him honorably, and confided very much in his judgment and wisdom, in all matters relating to the mission. However, Stockbridge proved to Mr. Edwards a more quiet, and, on many accounts, a much more comfortable situation than he was in before. It being so much in one corner of the country, his time was not so much taken up with company, as it was at Northampton, though many of his friends, from almost all parts of the land, often made him pleasant and profitable visits. And he had not so much concern and trouble with other churches as he was obliged to have when at Northampton, by being frequently sought to for advice, and called to assist in ecclesiastical councils. Here therefore he followed his beloved study more closely, and to better purpose than ever. In these six years he doubtless made swifter advances in knowledge than ever before, and added more to his manuscripts than in any equal space of time. And this was probably as *useful* a part of his life as any. For in this time he wrote the two last books that have been published by him,* (of which a more particular account will be given hereafter) by which he has doubtless greatly served the church of Christ, and will be a blessing to many thousands yet unborn.

Thus, after his uprightness and faithfulness had been sufficiently tried at Northampton, his Divine Master provided for him a quiet retreat, which was rendered the more sweet by the preceding storm; and where he had a better opportunity to pursue and finish some important work which God had for him to do: So that when in his own judgment, as well as that of others, his usefulness seemed to be cut off, he found greater opportunities of service than ever.

* His Treatise on "The Will," and on "Original Sin."

## SECT. II.

### *His being chosen President of Newjersey College.*

WHILE at Stockbridge, Mr. Edwards appears to have given full scope to his propensities and genius, stimulated by his ardent love of truth, and under the control of a correct judgment. While at Northampton his avocations were unavoidably numerous, and scarcely compatible with a profound attention to subjects he might be disposed to investigate; but at Stockbridge he found himself more at liberty in that respect. After having been so long in the ministry elsewhere, his pulpit preparations would require less time than before.... His studies were less interrupted by company and calls..... Former anxieties were now removed; his mind was drawn more closely to God, from his past experience of the fickleness of men; and thereby his mind became more composed, more enlightened, and more elevated. Here he was led to investigate subjects of radical importance in morals and theology, and to trace them to their first principles. And here he published his master piece of inquiry and close reasoning, his Treatise on the Will, which completely established his character as an adept in metaphysical science, and a profound divine. The celebrity he obtained by this work, and very deservedly obtained, had, doubtless, no small influence on the trustees of Newjersey College, among other considerations, in looking to Mr. Edwards to become their President, on the death of Mr. Burr, his son in law.

The Rev. Aaron Burr, President of Newjersey college, died on the 24th of Sept. 1757; and, at the next meeting of the trustees, Mr. Edwards was chosen his successor; the news of which was quite unexpected, and not a little surprising to him. He looked on himself in many respects so unqualified for that business, that he wondered that gentlemen of so good judgment, and so well acquainted with him, as he knew some of the trustees were, should think of *him* for that place. He

had many objections in his own mind against undertaking the business, both from his unfitness, and his particular circumstances; yet could not certainly determine that it was not his duty to accept it. The following extract of a letter which he wrote to the trustees, will give the reader a view of his sentiments and exercises on this occasion, as well as of the great designs he was deeply engaged in, and zealously prosecuting.

*Stockbridge, 19th October, 1757.*

Rev. and Hon. Gentlemen,

"I WAS not a little surprised on receiving the unexpected notice of your having made choice of me to succeed the late President Burr, as the head of Nassau Hall. I am much in doubt whether I am called to undertake the business, which you have done me the unmerited honor to choose me for. If some regard may be had to my outward comfort, I might mention the many inconveniencies and great detriment which may be sustained, by my removing with my numerous family, so far from all the estate I have in the world (without any prospect of disposing of it, under present circumstances, but with great loss) now when we have scarcely got over the trouble and damage sustained by our removal from Northampton, and have just begun to have our affairs in a comfortable situation for a subsistence in this place; and the expense I must immediately be at to put myself into circumstances tolerably comporting with the needful support of the honor of the office I am invited to; which will not well consist with my ability.

But this is not my main objection: The chief difficulties in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are these two: First my own defects, unfitting me for such an undertaking, many of which are generally known; besides other, which my own heart is conscious of. I have a constitution, in many respects peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid solids; vapid, sizy and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanor; with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me

for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college. This makes me shrink at the thoughts of taking upon me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business, attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness, and spirit of government; especially as succeeding one so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to every one to remark the wide difference. I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in algebra, and the higher parts of mathematics, and in the Greek classics; my Greek learning having been chiefly in the New Testament. The other thing is this; that my engaging in this business will not well consist with those views, and that course of employ in my study, which have long engaged and swallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.

And here, honored Sirs, (emboldened, by the testimony I have now received of your unmerited esteem, to rely on your candor) I will with freedom open myself to you.

My method of study, from my first beginning the work of the ministry, has been very much by writing; applying myself in this way, to improve every important hint; pursuing the clue to my utmost, when any thing in reading, meditation, or conversation, has been suggesed to my mind, that seemed to promise light, in any weighty point; thus penning what appeared to me my best thoughts, on innumerable subjects for my own benefit. The longer I prosecuted my studies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleasant and profitable I found it. The further I travelled in this way, the more and wider the field opened, which has occasioned my laying out many things in my mind to do in this manner, if God should spare my life, which my heart hath been much upon: Particularly many things against most of the prevailing errors of the present day, which I cannot with any patience see maintained (to the utter subverting of the gospel of Christ) with so high a hand, and so long continued a triumph, with so little control, when it appears so evident to me, that there is truly no foundation for any of this glorying and insult. I have already published something on one of the main

points in dispute between the Arminians and Calvinists; and have it in view, God willing (as I have already signified to the public) in like manner to consider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it. But besides these, I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a *History of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history; considering the affair of Christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ; which I suppose to be of all others the grand design of God, and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all the divine operations and decrees; particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order. The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events; beginning from eternity and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have account of in history or prophecy; till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things; when it shall be said, *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.* Concluding my work, with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity. This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, heaven, earth and hell; considering the connected successive events and alterations in each, so far as the scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural; a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine will appear to greatest advantage, in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, shewing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.

I have also for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work which I call the *Harmony of the Old and New Testament* in three parts. The first considering the prophecies of the Messiah, his redemption and kingdom; the evidences of their references to the Messiah, &c. comparing them all one with another, demonstrating their agreement, true scope, and sense; also considering all the various particulars wherein these prophecies have their exact fulfilment; shewing the universal, precise, and admirable correspondence between predictions and events. The second part: Considering the types of the Old Testament, shewing the evidence of their being intended as representations of the great things of the gospel of Christ; and the agreement of the type with the antitype. The third and great part, considering the harmony of the Old and New Testament, as to doctrine and precept. In the course of this work, I find there will be occasion for an explanation of a very great part of the holy scripture; which may, in such a view, be explained in a method, which to me seems the most entertaining and profitable, best tending to lead the mind to a view of the true spirit, design, life and soul of the scriptures, as well as their proper use and improvement. I have also many other things in hand, in some of which I have made great progress, which I will not trouble you with an account of. Some of these things, if divine providence favor, I should be willing to attempt a publication of. So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have, for benefiting my fellow creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak.

My heart is so much in these studies, that I cannot feel willing to put myself into an incapacity to pursue them any more in the future part of my life, to such a degree as I must, if I undertake to go through the same course of employ, in the office of a president, that Mr. Burr did, instructing in all the languages, and taking the whole care of the instruction of one of the classes in all parts of learning, besides his other labors. If I should see light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I should be willing to take upon me the work of a president, so far as it consists in the general inspec-

tion of the whole society; and to be subservient to the school, as to their order and methods of study and instruction, assisting myself in immediate instruction in the arts and sciences (as discretion should direct and occasion serve, and the state of things require) especially the senior class: And added to all, should be willing to do the whole work of a professor of divinity, in public and private lectures, proposing questions to be answered, and some to be discussed in writing and free conversation, in meetings of graduates and others, appointed in proper seasons for these ends. It would be now out of my way, to spend time, in a constant teaching of the languages; unless it be the Hebrew tongue; which I should be willing to improve myself in, by instructing others.

On the whole, I am much at a loss, with respect to the way of duty in this important affair: I am in doubt, whether, if I should engage in it, I should not do what both you and I would be sorry for afterwards. Nevertheless, I think the greatness of the affair, and the regard due to so worthy and venerable a body, as that of the trustees of Nassau Hall, requires my taking the matter into serious consideration. And unless you should appear to be discouraged by the things which I have now represented, as to any further expectation from me, I shall proceed to ask advice, of such as I esteem most wise, friendly and faithful: If after the mind of the commissioners in Boston is known, it appears that they consent to leave me at liberty, with respect to the business they have employed me in here."

In this suspense he determined to ask the advice of a number of gentlemen in the ministry, on whose judgment and friendship he could rely, and to act accordingly. Who, upon his, and his people's desire, met at Stockbridge, January 4, 1758; and, having heard Mr. Edwards's representation of the matter, and what his people had to say by way of objection against his removal, determined it was his duty to accept of the invitation to the presidency of the college. When they published their judgment and advice to Mr. Edwards and his people, he appeared uncommonly moved and affected with it, and fell into tears on the occasion, which was very unusual for

him in the presence of others: And soon after said to the gentlemen, who had given their advice, that it was matter of wonder to him, that they could so easily, as they appeared to do, get over the objections he had made against his removal..... But as he thought it his duty to be directed by their advice, he should now endeavor cheerfully to undertake it, believing he was in the way of his duty.

Accordingly, having had, by the application of the trustees of the college, the consent of the commissioners to resign their mission; he girded up his loins, and set off from Stockbridge for Princeton in January. He left his family at Stockbridge, not to be removed till spring. He had two daughters at Princeton, Mrs. Burr, the widow of the late President Burr, and his oldest daughter that was unmarried. His arrival at Princeton was to the great satisfaction and joy of the college.

The corporation met as soon as could be with convenience, after his arrival at the college, when he was by them fixed in the president's chair. While at Princeton, before his sickness, he preached in the college hall, sabbath after sabbath, to the great acceptance of the hearers; but did nothing as president, unless it was to give out some questions in divinity to the senior class, to be answered before him; each one having opportunity to study and write what he thought proper upon them. When they came together to answer them, they found so much entertainment and profit by it, especially by the light and instruction Mr. Edwards communicated in what he said upon the questions, when they had delivered what they had to say, that they spoke of it with the greatest satisfaction and wonder.

During this time, Mr. Edwards seemed to enjoy an uncommon degree of the presence of God. He told his daughters he once had great exercise, concern and fear, relative to his engaging in that business; but since it now appeared, so far as he could see, that he was called of God to that place and work, he did cheerfully devote himself to it, leaving himself and the event with God, to order what seemed to him good.

The small pox had now become very common in the country, and was then at Princeton, and likely to spread. And as Mr. Edwards had never had it, and inoculation was then practised with great success in those parts, he proposed to be inoculated, if the physician should advise to it, and the corporation would give their consent. Accordingly, by the advice of the physician, and the consent of the corporation, he was inoculated February 13th. He had it favorably, and it was thought all danger was over; but a secondary fever set in, and by reason of a number of pustules in his throat, the obstruction was such, that the medicines necessary to check the fever, could not be administered. It therefore raged till it put an end to his life on the 22d of March, 1758, in the 55th year of his age.

After he was sensible that he could not survive that sickness, a little before his death, he called his daughter to him, who attended him in his sickness, and addressed her in a few words, which were immediately taken down in writing, as near as could be recollected, and are as follows :....." Dear Lucy, It seems to me to be the will of God that I must shortly leave you; therefore give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her, that the uncommon union which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue for ever: And I hope she will be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now like to be left fatherless, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek a Father who will never fail you. And as to my funeral, I would have it to be like Mr. Burr's; and any additional sum of money that might be expected to be laid out that way, I would have it disposed of to charitable uses."*

He said but very little in his sickness; but was an admirable instance of patience and resignation to the last. Just at

* President Burr ordered, on his death bed, that his funeral should not be attended with pomp and cost. He ordered that nothing should be expended but what was agreeable to the dictates of Christian decency; and that the sum which must be expended at a modish funeral, above the necessary cost of a decent one, should be given to the poor, out of his estate.

the close of life, as some persons who stood by, expecting he would breathe his last in a few minutes, were lamenting his death, not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aspect on the interest of religion in general; to their surprise, not imagining that he heard, or ever would speak another word, he said, "Trust in God, and ye need not fear." These were his last words. What could have been more suitable to the occasion! And what need of more! in these is as much matter of instruction and support, as if he had written a volume. This is the only consolation to his bereaved friends, who are sensible of the loss they and the church of Christ have sustained in his death; God is all sufficient, and still has the care of his church.

He appeared to have the uninterrupted use of his reason to the last, and died with as much calmness, and composure, to all appearance, as that with which ones goes to sleep. The physician who inoculated and constantly attended him in his sickness, has the following words in his letter to Mrs. Edwards on this occasion: "Never did any mortal man more fully and clearly evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation and patient submission to the divine will, through every stage of his disease, than he. Not so much as one discontented expression, nor the least appearance of murmuring through the whole! And never did any person expire with more perfect freedom from pain; not so much as one distortion; but in the most proper sense of the words, he really fell asleep."

## CHAPTER VI.

### *His Publications, Manuscripts, and Genius as a Writer.*

MR. EDWARDS was greatly esteemed, and indeed celebrated, as an author, both in America and Europe. His publications naturally raise in the reader of judgment and

moral taste a high opinion of his greatness and piety. His books met with a good reception, in Scotland especially, and procured for him great esteem and applause. A gentleman of note there has the following words concerning Mr. Edwards, in a letter to one of his correspondents in America: "I looked on him as incomparably the greatest divine and [moral*] philosopher in Britain or her colonies; and rejoiced that one so eminently qualified for teaching divinity was chosen president of Newjersey College." And in another letter, the same gentleman says, "Ever since I was acquainted with Mr. Edwards's writings, I have looked upon him as the greatest divine this age has produced." And a reverend gentleman from Holland observed, "That Mr. Edwards's writings, especially on the *Freedom of the Will*, were held in great esteem there; and that the professors of the celebrated Academy presented their compliments to President Edwards." This gentleman further observes, that "Several members of the Classes of Amsterdam gave their thanks, by him, to pious Mr. Edwards, for his just observations on Mr. Brainerd's Life; which book was translated in Holland, and was highly approved by the University of Utrecht."

As these Memoirs are introductory to a complete edition of Mr. Edwards's Works, a professed enumeration of all his publications must be needless. Yet, as it is not desirable, on many accounts, to observe a chronological order in their arrangement, a view of those works which were published by himself, and the chief of his posthumous productions according to the order of time, may be acceptable to many. For this the reader is referred to the note below.†

* This must have been the writer's meaning.

† 1731 A Sermon preached at Boston, on 1 Cor. i. 29, 30.
1734 Do. at Northampton, on Matth. xvi. 17.
1736 A Narrative of the work of God, &c.
1738 Five Discourses, at Northampton,
1741 A Sermon preached at Enfield.
1741 Do. at Newhaven, on 1 John iv. 1.
1741 Do. at Hatfield.
1742 Thoughts on the Revival.

Viewing Mr. Edwards as a writer of sermons, we cannot give him the epithet *eloquent*, in the common acceptation of the term. We see in him nothing of the great masters of eloquence, except good sense, conclusive reasoning, and the power of moving the passions. Oratorical pomp, a cryptic method, luxurious descriptions presented to the imagination, and a rich variety of rhetorical figures, enter not into his plan. But his thoughts are well digested, and his reasoning conclusive; he produces considerations which not only force the assent, but also touch the conscience; he urges divine authority, by quoting and explaining scripture, in a form calculated to rouse the soul. He moves the passions, not by little artifices, like the professed rhetorician, but by saying what is much to the purpose in a plain, serious, and interesting way; and thus making reason, conscience, fear and love, to be decidedly in his favor. And thus the passions are moved in the most profitable manner; the more generous ones take the lead, and they are ever directed in the way of practical utility.

From what has been said, it is easy to conjecture, that close discussions were peculiarly suited to Mr. Edwards's talents.

1746 Religious Affections.
1747 On Prayer for a Revival.
1749 Ordination Sermon.
1749 Life of the Rev. David Brainerd.
1749 On Qualifications for Communion.
1752 A Reply to S. William's Answer.
1752 A Sermon preached at Newark, on James ii. 19.
1754 On the Freedom of the Will.
1758 On Original Sin.

N. B. This last was in the press when the author died. All his other works were collected from his papers after his decease; the principal of which were published in the following order.

1765 Eighteen Sermons, with his Life prefixed.
1774 The History of Redemption.
1788 On the Nature of Virtue.
1788 God's Last End in the Creation.
1788 Thirtythree Sermons.
1789 Twenty Sermons.
1793 Miscellaneous Observations.
1796 Miscellaneous Remarks.

And as a further evidence to shew which way his genius had its prevailing bent, it is observable, that his style improves in proportion to the abstruseness of his subject. Hence, generally speaking, the productions, especially those published by himself, which enter into close, profound, metaphysical distinctions, seem to have as much perspicuity as the nature of the case will admit. To be convinced of the propriety of this remark, the reader need only consult the Treatise on the Will; a work justly thought by able judges to be one of the greatest efforts of the human intellect. Here the author shews such force and strength of mind, such judgment, penetration, and accuracy of thought, as justly entitles him to the character of one of the greatest geniuses of his age. We may add, that this treatise goes further, perhaps, towards settling the main points in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, than any thing that had been written. Herein he has abundantly demonstrated the chief principles on which Arminians build their whole scheme, to be false and most absurd. Whenever, therefore, this book comes to be generally attended to, it will doubtless prove fatal to Arminian and Pelagian principles.

Though the work now mentioned afforded the fairest opportunity for metaphysical investigation; yet, the same penetrating turn, the same accuracy of discrimination, and the same closeness of reasoning, distinguish many of his other productions. Among these we might mention, particularly, his book on Original Sin, his Discourse on Justification, his Dissertation on the Nature of true Virtue, and that concerning the End for which God created the world. If the advocates of selfish virtue, and of universal restoration, will do themselves the justice to examine these Dissertations with candor and closeness, they may see cause to be of the author's mind. His other discourses are excellent, including much divinity, and tending above most that are published to awaken the conscience of the sinner, as well as to instruct and quicken the Christian. The sermon (preached at Enfield, 8th July, 1741) intitled "Sinners in the hand of an angry God," was attended with remarkable impressions on many of the hear-

ers. In his treatise intitled "An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement, and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion," he shews great acquaintance with scripture, and a remarkable attention to the prophetic part of it.

Mr. Edwards left a great number of volumes in manuscript, which he wrote in a miscellaneous way on almost all subjects in divinity. This he did, not with any design that they should ever be published in that form, but for the satisfaction and improvement of his own mind, and that he might retain the thoughts, which appeared to him worth preserving. Some idea of the progress he had made, and the materials he had collected in this way, he gives in his letter to the trustees of the college, when assigning his reasons against accepting the Presidentship. He had written much on the prophecies concerning the Messiah, on justification, the divinity of Christ, and the eternity of hell torments. He wrote much on the Bible, in the same way; penning his thoughts on particular passages, as they occurred to him in reading or meditation.

As the method he took to have his miscellaneous writings in good order, so as to be able with ease to turn to any particular subject, is perhaps as good as any, if not the best that has been proposed to the public; some account of it is here given, for the use of young students who have not yet adopted any method, and are disposed to improve their minds by writing. He *numbered* all his miscellaneous writings. The first thing he wrote is No. 1, the second No. 2, and so on. And when he had occasion to write on any particular subject, he first set down the number, and then wrote the *subject* in large character, that it might not escape his eye, when he should have occasion to turn to it. For instance, if he was going to write on the happiness of angels, and his last No. was 148, he would begin thus....149. ANGELS, their happiness. When he wrote what he designed, he would turn to his alphabetical table, and under the letter A, he would write, Angels, their happiness, if this was not there already, and then set down the number 149, close at the right hand of it. And if he had occasion to write any new thoughts on the same sub-

# A FAREWELL SERMON.

*PREACHED AT THE FIRST PRECINCT IN*

## *NORTHAMPTON,*

AFTER THE PEOPLE'S PUBLIC REJECTION OF THEIR MINISTER, AND RENOUNCING THEIR RELATION TO HIM AS PASTOR OF THE CHURCH THERE,

JUNE 22, 1750.

*Long before the sitting of the council, my people had sent to the Reverend Mr. Clark of Salem village, desiring him to write in opposition to my principles. Which gave me occasion to write to Mr. Clark, that he might have true information what my principles were. And in the time of the sitting of the council, I did, for their information, make a public declaration of my principles before them and the church, in the meeting house, of the same import with that in my letter to Mr. Clark, and very much in the same words: And then, afterwards, sent in to the council in writing, an extract of that letter, containing the information I had given to Mr. Clark, in the very words of my letter to him, that the council might read and consider it at their leisure, and have a more certain and satisfactory knowledge what my principles were. The extract which I sent to them was in the following words.*

"*I am often and I do not know but pretty generally, in the country, represented as of a new and odd opinion with respect to the terms of Christian communion, and as being for introducing a peculiar way of my own. Whereas, I do not perceive that I differ at all from the scheme of Dr. Watts, in his book entitled,* The rational Foundation of a Christian Church, and the Terms of Christian Communion; *which, he says, is the common sentiment of all reformed churches. I had not seen this book of Dr. Watts' when I published what I have written on the subject. But yet, I think my sentiments, as I have expressed them, are as exactly agreeable to what he lays down, as if I had been his pupil. Nor do I at all go beyond what Dr. Doddridge plainly shews to be his sentiments, in his* Rise and Progress of Religion, *and his* Sermons on Regeneration, *and his Paraphrase and Notes on the New Testament. Nor indeed, Sir, when I consider the sentiments you have expressed in your letters to Major Pomroy and Mr. Billing, can I perceive but that they come exactly to the same thing that I maintain. You suppose the sacraments are not converting ordinances: But that,* as seals of the covenant, they presuppose conversion, especially in the adult; and that it is visible saintship, or, in other words, a credible profession of faith and repentance, a solemn consent to the gospel covenant, joined with a good conversa-

tion, and competent measure of Christian knowledge, is what gives a gospel right to all sacred ordinances: But that it is necessary to those that come to these ordinances, and in those that profess a consent to the gospel covenant, that they be sincere in their profession, *or at least should think themselves so. The great thing which I have scrupled in the established method of this church's proceeding, and which I dare no longer go on in, is their publicly assenting to the form of words rehearsed on occasion of their admission to the communion, without pretending thereby to mean any such thing as any hearty consent to the terms of the gospel covenant, or to mean any such faith or repentance as belong to the covenant of grace, and are the grand conditions of that covenant: It being, at the same time that the words are used, their known and established principle, which they openly profess and proceed upon, that men may and ought to use these words, and mean no such thing, but something else of a nature far inferior; which I think they have no distinct, determinate notion of; but something consistent with their knowing that they do not choose God as their chief good, but love the world more than him, and that they do not give themselves up entirely to God, but make reserves; and in short, knowing that they do not heartily consent to the gospel covenant, but live still under the reigning power of the love of the world, and enmity to God and Christ. So that the words of their public profession, according to their openly established use, cease to be of the nature of any profession of gospel faith and repentance, or any proper compliance with the covenant: For it is their profession, that the words, as used, mean no such thing. The words used under these circumstances, do at least fail of being a credible profession of these things. I can conceive of no such virtue in a certain set of words, that it is proper, merely on the making these sounds, to admit persons to Christian sacraments, without any regard to any pretended meaning of these sounds: Nor can I think, that any institution of Christ has established any such terms of admission into the Christian church. It does not belong to the controversy between me and my people, how particular or large the profession should be, that is required. I should not choose to be confined to exact limits as to that matter: But rather than con-*

*of a person's first awakening and the manner of his convictions, illuminations, and comforts, should be publicly exhibited before the whole congregation, on occasion of his admission into the church; though this be not demanded as necessary to admission. I ever declared against insisting on a relation of experiences, in this sense, (viz. a relation of the particular time and steps of the operation of the Spirit, in first conversion) as the term of communion: Yet, if by a relation of experiences, be meant a declaration of experience of the great things wrought, wherein true grace and the essential acts and habits of holiness consist; in this sense, I think an account of a person's experiences necessary in order to his admission into full communion in the church. But that in whatever inquiries are made, and whatever accounts are given, neither minister nor church are to set up themselves as searchers of hearts, but are to accept the serious, solemn profession of the well instructed professor, of a good life, as best able to determine what he finds in his own heart.*

*These things may serve in some measure to set right those of my readers who have been misled in their apprehensions of the state of the controversy between me and my people, by the forementioned misrepresentations.*

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

# A FAREWELL SERMON.

2 COR. I. 14.

AS ALSO YOU HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED US IN PART, THAT WE ARE YOUR REJOICING, EVEN AS YE ALSO ARE OURS IN THE DAY OF THE LORD JESUS.

THE apostle, in the preceding part of the chapter, declares what great troubles he met with in the course of his ministry. In the text and two foregoing verses he declares what were his comforts and supports under the troubles he met with. There are four things in particular.

1. That he had approved himself to his own conscience, ver. 12. "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you wards."

2. Another thing he speaks of as matter of comfort, is that, as he had approved himself to his own conscience, so he had also to the consciences of his hearers, the Corinthians, whom he now wrote to, and that they should approve of him at the day of judgment.

3. The hope he had of seeing the blessed fruit of his labors and sufferings in the ministry, in their happiness and glory, in that great day of accounts.

4. That, in his ministry among the Corinthians, he had approved himself to his Judge, who would approve and reward his faithfulness in that day.

These three last particulars are signified in my text, and the preceding verse; and indeed all the four are implied in the text: It is implied, that the Corinthians had acknowledged him as their spiritual Father, and as one that had been

faithful among them, and as the means of their future joy and glory at the day of judgment, and one whom they should then see, and have a joyful meeting with as such. It is implied, that the apostle expected at that time to have a joyful meeting with them before the Judge, and with joy to behold their glory, as the fruit of his labors; and so they would be his rejoicing. It is implied also that he then expected to be approved of the great Judge, when he and they should meet together before him; and that he would then acknowledge his fidelity, and that this had been the means of their glory; and that thus he would, as it were, give them to him as his crown of rejoicing. But this the apostle could not hope for, unless he had the testimony of his own conscience in his favor. And therefore the words do imply, in the strongest manner, that he had approved himself to his own conscience.

There is one thing implied in each of these particulars, and in every part of the text, which is that point I shall make the subject of my present discourse, viz.

## DOCTRINE.

"Ministers, and the people that are under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal at the day of judgment."

Ministers, and the people that have been under their care, must be parted in this world, how well soever they have been united: If they are not separated before, they must be parted by death; and they may be separated while life is continued. We live in a world of change, where nothing is certain or stable; and where a little time, a few revolutions of the sun, bring to pass strange things, surprising alterations, in particular persons, in families, in towns and churches, in countries and nations. It often happens, that those who seem most united, in a little time are most disunited, and at the greatest distance. Thus ministers and people, between whom there has been the greatest mutual regard and strictest union, may not only differ in their judgments, and be alienated in affection, but one may rend from the other, and all relation be

tween them be dissolved; the minister may be removed to a distant place, and they may never have any more to do one with another in this world. But if it be so, there is one meeting more that they must have, and that is in the last great day of accounts.

Here I would shew,

1. In what manner ministers, and the people who have been under their care, shall meet one another at the day of judgment.

2. For what purposes.

3. For what reasons God has so ordered it, that ministers and their people shall then meet together in such a manner, and for such purposes.

I. I would shew, in some particulars, in what manner ministers and the people who have been under their care, shall meet one another at the day of judgment. Concerning this I would observe two things in general.

1. That they shall not then meet only as all mankind must then meet, but there will be something peculiar in the manner of their meeting.

2. That their meeting together at that time shall be very different from what used to be in the house of God in this world.

1. They shall not meet at that day as all the world must then meet together. I would observe a difference in two things.

(1.) As to a clear actual view, and distinct knowledge and notice of each other.

Although the whole world will be then present, all mankind of all generations gathered in one vast assembly, with all of the angelic nature, both elect and fallen angels; yet we need not suppose that every one will have a distinct and particular knowledge of each individual of the whole assembled multitude, which will undoubtedly consist of many millions of millions. Though it is probable that men's capacities will be much greater than in the present state, yet they will not be

infinite: Though their understanding and comprehension will be vastly extended, yet men will not be deified. There will probably be a very enlarged view that particular persons will have of various parts and members of that vast assembly, and so of the proceedings of that great day; but yet it must needs be, that according to the nature of finite minds, some persons and some things, at that day, shall fall more under the notice of particular persons than others; and this (as we may well suppose) according as they shall have a nearer concern with some than others, in the transactions of the day. There will be special reason why those who have had special concerns together in this world, in their state of probation, and whose mutural affairs will be then to be tried and judged, should, especially be set in one another's view. Thus we may suppose, that rulers and subjects, earthly judges and those whom they have judged, neighbors who have had mutural converse, dealings, and contests, heads of families and their children and servants, shall then meet, and in a peculiar distinction be set together. And especially will it be thus with ministers and their people. It is evident by the text, that these shall be in each other's view, shall distinctly know each other, and shall have particular notice one of another at that time.

(2.) They shall meet together, as having special concern one with another in the great transactions of that day.

Although they shall meet the whole world at that time, yet they will not have any immediate and particular concern with all. Yea, the far greater part of those who shall then be gathered together, will be such as they have had no intercourse with in their state of probation, and so will have no mutual concerns to be judged of. But as to ministers and the people that have been under their care, they will be such as have had much immediate concern one with another, in matters of the greatest moment, that ever mankind have to do one with another in. Therefore they especially must meet and be brought together before the judge, as having special concern one with another in the design and business of that great day of accounts.

Thus their meeting, as to the manner of it, will be diverse from the meeting of mankind in general.

2. Their meeting at the day of judgment will be very diverse from their meetings one with another in this world.

Ministers and their people, while their relation continues, often meet together in this world: They are wont to meet from Sabbath to Sabbath, and at other times for the public worship of God, and administration of ordinances, and the solemn services of God's house: And besides these meetings, they have also occasions to meet for the determining and managing their ecclesiastical affairs, for the exercise of church discipline, and the settling and adjusting those things which concern the purity and good order of public administrations. But their meeting at the day of judgment will be exceeding diverse, in its manner and circumstance, from any such meetings and interviews as they have, one with another in the present state. I would observe how, in a few particulars.

(1.) Now they meet together in a preparatory mutable state, but then in an unchangeable state.

Now sinners in the congregation meet their minister in a state wherein they are capable of a saving change, capable of being turned, through God's blessing on the ministrations and labors of their pastor, from the power of Satan unto God; and being brought out of a state of guilt, condemnation and wrath, to a state of peace and favor with God, to the enjoyment of the privileges of his children, and a title to their eternal inheritance. And saints now meet their minister with great remains of corruption, and sometimes under great spiritual difficulties and affliction: And therefore are yet the proper subjects of means of an happy alteration of their state, consisting in a greater freedom from these things, which they have reason to hope for in the way of an attendance on ordinances, and of which God is pleased commonly to make his ministers the instruments. And ministers and their people now meet in order to the bringing to pass such happy changes; they are the great benefits sought in their solemn meetings in this world.

But when they shall meet together at the day of judgment, it will be far otherwise. They will not then meet in order to the use of means for the bringing to effect any such changes; for they will all meet in an unchangeable state. Sinners will be in an unchangeable state: They who then shall be under the guilt and power of sin, and have the wrath of God abiding on them, shall be beyond all remedy or possibility of change, and shall meet their ministers without any hopes of relief or remedy, or getting any good by their means. And as for the saints, they will be already perfectly delivered from all their before remaining corruption, temptation, and calamities of every kind, and set forever out of their reach; and no deliverance, no happy alteration, will remain to be accomplished in the way of the use of means of grace, under the administrations of ministers. It will then be pronounced, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still."

(2.) Then they shall meet together in a state of clear, certain and infallible light.

Ministers are set as guides and teachers, and are represented in scripture as lights set up in the churches; and in the present state meet their people from time to time in order to instruct and enlighten them, to correct their mistakes, and to be a voice behind them, when they turn aside to the right hand or to the left, saying, "This is the way, walk in it;" to evince and confirm the truth by exhibiting the proper evidences of it, and to refute errors and corrupt opinions, to convince the erroneous and establish the doubting. But when Christ shall come to judgment, every error and false opinion shall be detected; all deceit and illusion shall vanish away before the light of that day, as the darkness of the night vanishes at the appearance of the rising sun; and every doctrine of the word of God shall then appear in full evidence, and none shall remain unconvinced; all shall know the truth with the greatest certainty, and there shall be no mistakes to rectify.

Now ministers and their people may disagree in their judgments concerning some matters of religion, and may

sometimes meet to confer together concerning those things wherein they differ, and to hear the reasons that may be offered on one side and the other; and all may be ineffecual as to any conviction of the truth: They may meet and part again, no more agreed than before; and that side which was in the wrong, may remain so still: Sometimes the meetings of ministers with their people in such a case of disagreeing sentiments, are attended with unhappy debate and controversy, managed with much prejudice and want of candor; not tending to light and conviction, but rather to confirm and increase darkness, and establish opposition to the truth, and alienation of affection one from another. But when they shall hereafter meet together, at the day of judgment, before the tribunal of the great Judge, the mind and will of Christ will be made known; and there shall no longer be any debate or difference of opinions; the evidence of the truth shall appear beyond all dispute, and all controversies shall be finally and forever decided.

Now ministers meet their people, in order to enlighten and awaken the consciences of sinners: Setting before them the great evil and danger of sin, the strictness of Gods law, their own wickedness of heart and practice, the great guilt they are under, the wrath that abides upon them, and their impotence, blindness, poverty, and helpless and undone condition: But all is often in vain; they remain still, notwithstanding all their ministers can say, stupid and unawakened, and their consciences unconvinced. But it will not be so at their last meeting at the day of judgment; sinners, when they shall meet their minister before their great Judge, will not meet him with a stupid conscience: They will then be fully convinced of the truth of those things which they formerly heard from him, concerning the greatness and terrible majesty of God, his holiness, and hatred of sin, and his awful justice in punishing it, the strictness of his law, and the dreadfulness and truth of his threatenings, and their own unspeakable guilt and misery: And they shall never more be insensible of these things: The eyes of conscience will now be fully enlightened,

and never shall be blinded again: The mouth of conscience shall now be opened, and never shall be shut any more.

Now ministers meet with their people, in public and private, in order to enlighten them concerning the state of their souls; to open and apply the rules of God's word to them, in order to their searching their own hearts, and discerning the state that they are in; but now ministers have no infallible discerning of the state of the souls of their people; and the most skilful of them are liable to mistakes, and often are mistaken in things of this nature; nor are the people able certainly to know the state of their minister, or one another's state; very often those pass among them for saints, and it may be eminent saints, that are grand hypocrites; and on the other hand, those are sometimes censured, or hardly received into their charity, that are indeed some of God's jewels. And nothing is more common than for men to be mistaken concerning their own state: Many that are abominable to God, and the children of his wrath, think highly of themselves, as his precious saints and dear children. Yea, there is reason to think, that often some that are most bold in their confidence of their safe and happy state, and think themselves not only true saints, but the most eminent saints in the congregation, are in a peculiar manner a smoke in God's nose. And thus it undoubtedly often is in those congregations where the word of God is most faithfully dispensed, notwithstanding all that ministers can say in their clearest explications, and most searching applications of the doctrines and rules of God's word to the souls of their hearers, in their meetings one with another. But in the day of judgment they shall have another sort of meeting; then the secrets of every heart shall be fully manifest, and every man's state shall be perfectly known. 1 Cor. iv. 5. "Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: And then shall every man have praise of God." Then none shall be deceived concerning his own state, nor shall be any more in doubt about it. There shall be an eternal end to all the ill conceit and vain hopes of deluded hypo-

erites, and all the doubts and fears of sincere Christians. And then shall all know the state of one another's souls: The people shall know whether their minister has been sincere and faithful, and the ministers shall know the state of every one of their people, and to whom the word and ordinances of God have been a savor of life unto life, and to whom a savor of death unto death.

Now in this present state it often happens that when ministers and people meet together to debate and manage their ecclesiastical affairs, especially in a state of controversy, they are ready to judge and censure one another with regard to each other's views and designs, and the principles and ends that each is influenced by; and are greatly mistaken in their judgment, and wrong one another with regard to each others' views and designs and the principles and ends that each is influenced by, and are greatly mistaken in their judgment, and wrong one another in their censures: But at that future meeting, things will be set in a true and perfect light, and the principles and aims that every one has acted from shall be certainly known; and there will be an end to all errors of this kind, and all unrighteous censures.

(3.) In this world, ministers and their people often meet together to hear of and wait upon an unseen Lord; but at the day of judgment, they shall meet in his most immediate and visible presence.

Ministers, who now often meet their people to preach to them the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, to convince them that there is a God, and declare to them what manner of being he is, and to convince them that he governs, and will judge the world, and that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, and to preach to them a Christ in heaven, and at the right hand of God, in an unseen world, shall then meet their people in the most immediate sensible presence of this great God, Saviour, and Judge, appearing in the most plain, visible, and open manner, with great glory, with all his holy angels, before them and the whole world. They shall not meet them to hear about an absent Christ, an unseen Lord, and future Judge; but to appear before that Judge,

and as being set together in the presence of that supreme Lord, in his immense glory and awful majesty, whom they have heard so often of in their meetings together on earth.

(4.) The meeting at the last day, of ministers, and the people that have been under their care, will not be attended by any one with a careless heedless heart.

With such an heart are their meetings often attended in this world by many persons, having little regard to him whom they pretend unitedly to adore in the solemn duties of his public worship, taking little heed to their own thoughts or frame of their minds, not attending to the business they are engaged in, or considering the end for which they are come together. But the meeting at that great day will be very different: There will not be one careless heart, no sleeping, no wandering of mind from the great concern of the meeting, no inattentiveness to the business of the day, no regardlessness of the presence they are in, or of those great things which they shall hear from Christ at that meeting, or that they formerly heard from him, and of him, by their ministers, in their meeting in a state of trial, or which they shall now hear their ministers declaring concerning them before their judge.

Having observed these things, concerning the manner and circumstances of this future meeting of ministers and the people that have been under their care, before the tribunal of Christ at the day of judgment, I now proceed,

II. To observe to what purposes they shall then meet.

1. To give an account, before the great Judge, of their behavior one to another, in the relation they stood in to each other in this world.

Ministers are sent forth by Christ to their people on his business, are his servants and messengers; and, when they have finished their service, they must return to their master to give him an account of what they have done, and of the entertainment they have had in performing their ministry. Thus we find, in Luke xiv. 16....21, That when the servant who was sent forth to call the guests to the great supper, had done his errand, and finished his appointed service, he returned to his

master, and gave him an account of what he had done, and of the entertainment he had received. And when the master being angry, sent his servant to others, he returns again, and gives his master an account of his conduct and success. So we read, in Heb. xiii. 17, of ministers being rulers in the house of God, "that watch for souls, as those that must give account." And we see by the forementioned Luke xiv. that ministers must give an account to their master, not only of their own behavior in the discharge of their office, but also of their peoples' reception of them, and of the treatment they have met with among them.

And therefore, as they will be called to give an account of both, they shall give an account at the great day of accounts in the presence of their people; they and their people being both present before their Judge.

Faithful ministers will then give an account with joy, concerning those who have received them well, and made a good improvement of their ministry; and these will be given them, at that day, as their crown of rejoicing. And, at the same time, they will give an account of the ill treatment of such as have not well received them and their messages from Christ: They will meet these, not as they used to do in this world, to counsel and warn them, but to bear witness against them; and as their judges, and assessors with Christ, to condemn them. And, on the other hand, the people will, at that day, rise up in judgment against wicked and unfaithful ministers, who have sought their own temporal interest more than the good of the souls of their flock.

2. At that time ministers, and the people who have been under their care, shall meet together before Christ, that he may judge between them, as to any controversies which have subsisted between them in this world.

So it very often comes to pass in this evil world, that great differences and controversies arise between ministers and the people that are under their pastoral care. Though they are under the greatest obligations to live in peace, above persons in almost any relation whatever; and although contests and dissensions between persons so related are the most unhappy

them; every one being sentenced and recompensed according to his works, either in receiving and wearing a crown of eternal joy and glory, or in suffering everlasting shame and pain.

I come now to the next thing proposed, viz.

III. To give some reasons why we may suppose God has so ordered it, that ministers and the people that have been under their care, shall meet together at the day of judgment, in such a manner and for such purposes.

There are two things which I would now observe.

1. The mutual concerns of ministers and their people are of the greatest importance.

The Scripture declares, that God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. It is fit that all the concerns, and all the behavior of mankind, both public and private, should be brought at last before God's tribunal, and finally determined by an infallible Judge: But it is especially requisite that it should be thus, as to affairs of very great importance.

Now the mutual concerns of a Christian minister and his church and congregation, are of the vastest importance: In many respects, of much greater moment than the temporal concerns of the greatest earthly monarchs, and their kingdoms or empires. It is of vast consequence how ministers discharge their office, and conduct themselves towards their people in the work of the ministry, and in affairs appertaining to it. It is also a matter of vast importance, how a people receive and entertain a faithful minister of Christ, and what improvement they make of his ministry. These things have a more immediate and direct respect to the great and last end for which man was made, and the eternal welfare of mankind, than any of the temporal concerns of men, whether public or private. And therefore it is especially fit that these affairs should be brought into judgment and openly determined and settled in truth and righteousness; and that to this end, ministers and their people should meet together before the omniscient and infallible judge.

2. The mutual concerns of ministers and their people have a special relation to the main things appertaining to the day of judgment.

They have a special relation to that great and divine person who will then appear as Judge. Ministers are his messengers, sent forth by him; and, in their office and administrations among their people, represent his person, stand in his stead, as those that are sent to declare his mind, to do his work, and to speak and act in his name: And therefore it is especially fit that they should return to him to give an account of their work and success. The king is judge of all his subjects, they are all accountable to him: But it is more especially requisite that the king's ministers, who are especially intrusted with the administrations of his kingdom, and that are sent forth on some special negotiation, should return to him, to give an account of themselves, and their discharge of their trust, and the reception they have met with.

Ministers are not only messengers of the person who at the last day will appear as Judge, but the errand they are sent upon, and the affairs they have committed to them as his ministers, do most immediately concern his honor, and the interest of his kingdom: The work they are sent upon is to promote the designs of his administration and government; and therefore their business with their people has a near relation to the day of judgment; for the great end of that day is completely to settle and establish the affairs of his kingdom, to adjust all things that pertain to it, that every thing that is opposite to the interests of his kingdom may be removed, and that every thing which contributes to the completeness and glory of it may be perfected and confirmed, that this great King may receive his due honor and glory.

Again, the mutual concerns of ministers and their people have a direct relation to the concerns of the day of judgment, as the business of ministers with their people is to promote the eternal salvation of the souls of men, and their escape from eternal damnation; and the day of judgment is the day appointed for that end, openly to decide and settle men's eternal state, to fix some in a state of eternal salvation, and to

bring their salvation to its utmost consummation, and to fix others in a state of everlasting damnation and most perfect misery. The mutual concerns of ministers and people have a most direct relation to the day of judgment, as the very design of the work of the ministry is the people's preparation for that day: Ministers are sent to warn them of the approach of that day, to forewarn them of the dreadful sentence then to be pronounced on the wicked, and declare to them the blessed sentence then to be pronounced on the righteous, and to use means with them that they may escape the wrath which is then to come on the ungodly, and obtain the reward then to be bestowed on the saints.

And as the mutual concerns of ministers and their people have so near and direct a relation to that day, it is especially fit that those concerns should be brought in to that day, and there settled and issued; and that in order to this, ministers and their people should meet and appear together before the great Judge at that day.

## APPLICATION.

THE improvement I would make of the things which have been observed, is to lead the people here present who have been under my pastoral care, to some reflections, and give them some advice suitable to our present circumstances; relating to what has been lately done in order to our being separated, as to the relation we have heretofore stood in one to another; but expecting to meet each other before the great tribunal at the day of judgment.

The deep and serious consideration of that our future most solemn meeting, is certainly most suitable at such a time as this; there having so lately been that done, which, in all probability, will (as to the relation we have heretofore stood in) be followed with an everlasting separation.

How often have we met together in the house of God in this relation? How often have I spoke to you, instructed, counselled, warned, directed, and fed you, and administered

ordinances among you, as the people which were committed to my care, and whose precious souls I had the charge of? But in all probability this never will be again.

The prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxv. 3. puts the people in mind how long he had labored among them in the work of the ministry: "From the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day (that is, the three and twentieth year) the word of the Lord came unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking." I am not about to compare myself with the prophet Jeremiah; but in this respect I can say as he did, that "I have spoken the word of God to you, unto the three and twentieth year, rising early and speaking." It was three and twenty years, the 15th day of last February, since I have labored in the work of the ministry, in the relation of a pastor to this church and congregation. And though my strength has been weakness, having always labored under great infirmity of body, besides my insufficiency for so great a charge in other respects, yet I have not spared my feeble strength, but have exerted it for the good of your souls. I can appeal to you as the apostle does to his hearers, Gal. iv. 13. "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you." I have spent the prime of my life and strength in labors for your eternal welfare. You are my witnesses, that what strength I have had I have not neglected in idleness, nor laid out in prosecuting worldly schemes, and managing temporal affairs, for the advancement of my outward estate, and aggrandizing myself and family; but have given myself wholly to the work of the ministry, laboring in it night and day, rising early and applying myself to this great business to which Christ appointed me. I have found the work of the ministry among you to be a great work indeed, a work of exceeding care, labor and difficulty: Many have been the heavy burdens that I have borne in it, which my strength has been very unequal to. God called me to bear these burdens; and I bless his name, that he has so supported me as to keep me from sinking under them, and that his power herein has been manifested in my weakness; so that although I have often

been troubled on every side, yet I have not been distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed.

But now I have reason to think my work is finished which I had to do as your minister: You have publicly rejected me, and my opportunities cease.

How highly therefore does it now become us, to consider of that time when we must meet one another before the chief Shepherd? When I must give an account of my stewardship, of the service I have done for, and the reception and treatment I have had among the people he sent me to; And you must give an account of your own conduct towards me, and the improvement you have made of these three and twenty years of my ministry. For then both you and I must appear together, and we both must give an account, in order to an infallible, righteous and eternal sentence to be passed upon us, by him who will judge us with respect to all that we have said or done in our meeting here, all our conduct one towards another, in the house of God, and elsewhere, on Sabbathdays, and on other days; who will try our hearts and manifest our thoughts, and the principles and frames of our minds, will judge us with respect to all the controversies which have subsisted between us, with the strictest impartiality, and will examine our treatment of each other in those controversies: There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid which shall not be known; all will be examined in the searching, penetrating light of God's omniscience and glory, and by him whose eyes are as a flame of fire; and truth and right shall be made plainly to appear, being stripped of every veil; and all error, falsehood, unrighteousness, and injury shall be laid open, stripped of every disguise; every specious pretence, every cavil, and all false reasoning shall vanish in a moment, as not being able to bear the light of that day. And then our hearts will be turned inside out, and the secrets of them will be made more plainly to appear than our outward actions do now. Then it shall appear what the ends are which we have aimed at, what have been the governing principles which we have acted from, and what have been the dispositions we have exercised in our ecclesiastical disputes

and contests. Then it will appear whether I acted uprightly, and from a truly conscientious, careful regard to my duty to my great Lord and Master, in some former ecclesiastical controversies, which have been attended with exceeding unhappy circumstances and consequences: It will appear whether there was any just cause for the resentment which was manifested on those occasions. And then our late grand controversy, concerning the qualifications necessary for admission to the privileges of members, in complete standing, in the visible church of Christ, will be examined and judged in all its parts and circumstances, and the whole set forth in a clear, certain, and perfect light. Then it will appear whether the doctrine which I have preached and published concerning this matter be Christ's own doctrine, whether he will not own it as one of the precious truths which have proceeded from his own mouth, and vindicate and honor as such before the whole universe. Then it will appear what is meant by "The man that comes without the wedding garment;" for that is the day spoken of, Matth. xxii. 13. "Wherein such an one shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And then it will appear whether, in declaring this doctrine, and acting agreeable to it, and in my general conduct in the affair I have been influenced from any regard to my own temporal interest or honor, or desire to appear wiser than others; or have acted from any sinister, secular views whatsoever; and whether what I have done has not been from a careful, strict, and tender regard to the will of my Lord and Master, and because I dare not offend him, being satisfied what his will was, after a long, diligent, impartial, and prayerful inquiry; having this constantly in view and prospect, to engage me to great solicitude not rashly to determine truth to be on this side of the question, where I am now persuaded it is, that such a determination would not be for my temporal interest, but every way against it, bringing a long series of extreme difficulties, and plunging me into an abyss of trouble and sorrow. And then it will appear whether my people have done their duty to their pastor with respect to this matter; whether they have

shown a right temper and spirit on this occasion; whether they have done me justice in hearing, attending to and considering what I had to say in evidence of what I believed and taught as part of the counsel of God; whether I have been treated with that impartiality, candor, and regard which the just Judge esteemed due; and whether, in the many steps, which have been taken, and the many things that have been said and done in the course of this controversy, righteousness and charity, and Christian decorum has been maintained; or, if otherwise, to how great a degree these things have been violated. Then every step of the conduct of each of us in this affair, from first to last, and the spirit we have exercised in all shall be examined and manifested, and our own consciences shall speak plain and loud, and each of us shall be convinced, and the world shall know; and never shall there be any more mistake, misrepresentation, or misapprehension of the affair to eternity.

This controversy is now probably brought to an issue between you and me as to this world; it has issued in the event of the week before last: But it must have another decision at that great day, which certainly will come, when you and I shall meet together before the great judgment seat: And therefore I leave it to that time, and shall say no more about it at present.

But I would now proceed to address myself particularly to several sorts of persons.

1. To those who are professors of godliness amongst us.

I would now call you to a serious consideration of that great day wherein you must meet him who has heretofore been your pastor, before the Judge whose eyes are as a flame of fire.

I have endeavored according to my best ability, to search the word of God, with regard to the distinguishing notes of true piety, those by which persons might best discover their state, and most surely and clearly judge of themselves. And these rules and marks I have from time to time applied to you, in the preaching of the word to the utmost of my skill, and in

the most plain and searching manner that I have been able, in order to the detecting the deceived hypocrite, and establishing the hopes and comforts of the sincere. And yet it is to be feared, that after all that I have done, I now leave some of you in a deceived, deluded state; for it is not to be supposed that among several hundred professors, none are deceived.

Henceforward I am like to have no more opportunity to take the care and charge of your souls, to examine and search them. But still I entreat you to remember and consider the rules which I have often laid down to you during my ministry, with a solemn regard to the future day when you and I must meet together before our Judge; when the uses of examination you have heard from me must be rehearsed again before you, and those rules of trial must be tried, and it will appear whether they have been good or not; and it will also appear whether you have impartially heard them, and tried yourselves by them; and the Judge himself, who is infallible, will try both you and me: And after this none will be deceived concerning the state of their souls.

I have often put you in mind, that whatever your pretences to experiences, discoveries, comforts, and joys have been, at that day every one will be judged according to his works; and then you will find it so.

May you have a minister, of greater knowledge of the word of God, and better acquaintance with soul cases, and of greater skill in applying himself to souls, whose discourses may be more searching and convincing; that such of you as have held fast deceit under my preaching, may have your eyes opened by his; that you may be undeceived before that great day.

What means and helps for instruction and selfexamination you may hereafter have is uncertain; but one thing is certain, that the time is short, your opportunity for rectifying mistakes in so important a concern will soon come to an end. We live in a world of great changes. There is now a great change come to pass; a controversy is at an end which you have continued for so many years: But the time is coming,

and will soon come, when you will pass out of time into eternity; and so will pass from under all means of grace whatsoever.

The greater part of you who are professors of godliness have, (to use the phrase of the apostle) "acknowledged me, in part:" You have heretofore acknowledged me to be your spiritual father, the instrument of the greatest good to you that ever is, or can be obtained by any of the children of men. Consider of that day when you and I shall meet before our Judge, when it shall be examined whether you have had from me the treatment which is due to spiritual children, and whether you have treated me as you ought to have treated a spiritual father. As the relation of a natural parent brings great obligations on children in the sight of God; so much more, in many respects, does the relation of a spiritual father bring great obligations on such whose conversation and eternal salvation they suppose God has made them the instruments of: 1 Cor. iv. 15. "For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel."

II. Now I am taking my leave of this people I would apply myself to such among them as I leave in a Christless, graceless condition; and would call on such seriously to consider of that solemn day when they and I must meet before the Judge of the world.

My parting with you is in some respects in a peculiar manner a melancholy parting; inasmuch as I leave you in most melancholy circumstances; because I leave you in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, having the wrath of God abiding on you, and remaining under condemnation to everlasting misery and destruction. Seeing I must leave you, it would have been a comfortable and happy circumstance of our parting, if I had left you in Christ, safe and blessed in that sure refuge and glorious rest of the saints. But it is otherwise. I leave you far off, aliens and strangers, wretched subjects and captives of sin and Satan, and prisoners of vindictive justice; without Christ, and without God in the world.

Your consciences bear me witness, that while I had opportunity, I have not ceased to warn you, and set before you your danger. I have studied to represent the misery and necessity of your circumstances in the clearest manner possible. I have tried all ways that I could think of tending to awaken your consciences, and make you sensible of the necessity of your improving your time, and being speedy in flying from the wrath to come, and thorough in the use of means for your escape and safety. I have diligently endeavored to find out and use the most powerful motives to persuade you to take care for your own welfare and salvation. I have not only endeavored to awaken you, that you might be moved with fear, but I have used my utmost endeavors to win you: I have sought out acceptable words, that if possible I might prevail upon you to forsake sin, and turn to God, and accept of Christ as your Saviour and Lord. I have spent my strength very much in these things. But yet, with regard to you whom I am now speaking to, I have not been successful: But have this day reason to complain in those words, Jer. vi. 29. "The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away." It is to be feared that all my labors, as to many of you, have served no other purpose but to harden you; and that the word which I have preached instead of being a savor of life unto life, has been a savor of death unto death. Though I shall not have any account to give for the future of such as have openly and resolutely renounced my ministry, as of a betrustment committed to me; yet remember you must give account for yourselves, of your care of your own souls, and your improvement of all means past and future, through your whole lives. God only knows what will become of your poor perishing souls, what means you may hereafter enjoy, or what disadvantages and temptations you may be under. May God in his mercy grant, that however all past means have been unsuccessful, you may have future means which may have a new effect; and that the word of God, as it shall be hereafter dispensed to you, may prove as the fire and the hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. However, let me now at part-

ing exhort and beseech you not wholly to forget the warnings you have had while under my ministry. When you and I shall meet at the day of judgment, then you will remember them: The sight of me, your former minister, on that occasion, will soon revive them in your memory; and that in a very affecting manner. O do not let that be the first time that they are so revived!

You and I are now parting one from another as to this world; let us labor that we may not be parted after our meeting at the last day. If I have been your faithful pastor, (which will that day appear whether I have or no) then I shall be acquitted, and shall ascend with Christ. O do your part, that in such a case, it may not be so, that you should be forced eternally to part from me, and all that have been faithful in Christ Jesus. This is a sorrowful parting that now is between you and me; but that would be a more sorrowful parting to you than this. This you may perhaps bear without being much affected with it, if you are not glad of it; but such a parting in that day will most deeply, sensibly, and dreadfully affect you.

III. I would address myself to those who are under some awakenings.

Blessed be God that there are some such, and that (although I have reason to fear I leave multitudes in this large congregation in a Christless state) yet I do not leave them all in total stupidity and carelessness about their souls. Some of you, that I have reason to hope are under some awakenings, have acquainted me with your circumstances; which has a tendency to cause me, now I am leaving you, to take my leave of you with peculiar concern for you. What will be the issue of your present exercise of mind I know not: But it will be known at that day, when you and I shall meet before the judgment seat of Christ. Therefore now be much in consideration of that day.

Now I am parting with this flock, I would once more press upon you the counsels I have heretofore given, to take heed of being slighty in so great a concern, to be thorough and in

good earnest in the affair, and to beware of backsliding, to hold on and hold out to the end. And cry mightily to God, that these great changes that pass over this church and congregation do not prove your overthrow. There is great temptation in them; and the devil will undoubtedly seek to make his advantage of them, if possible to cause your present convictions and endeavors to be abortive. You had need to double your diligence and watch and pray, lest you be overcome by temptation.

Whoever may hereafter stand related to you as your spiritual guide, my desire and prayer is, that the great Shepherd of the sheep would have a special respect to you, and be your guide, (for there is none teacheth like him) and that he who is the infinite fountain of light, would "open your eyes, and turn you from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that you may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in Christ;" that so, in that great day, when I shall meet you again before your Judge and mine, we may meet in joyful and glorious circumstances, never to be separated any more.

IV. I would apply myself to the young people of the congregation.

Since I have been settled in the work of the ministry in this place, I have ever had a peculiar concern for the souls of the young people, and a desire that religion might flourish among them; and have especially exerted myself in order to it; because I knew the special opportunity they had beyond others, and that ordinarily those whom God intended mercy for, were brought to fear and love him in their youth. And it has ever appeared to me a peculiarly amiable thing, to see young people walking in the ways of virtue and Christian piety, having their hearts purified and sweetened with a principle of divine love. And it has appeared a thing exceeding beautiful, and what would be much to the adorning and happiness of the town, if the young people could be persuaded when they meet together, to converse as Christians, and as the children of

God; avoiding impurity, levity, and extravagance; keeping strictly to rules of virtue, and conversing together of the things of God, and Christ, and heaven. This is what I have longed for: And it has been exceeding grievous to me when I have heard of vice, vanity, and disorder among our youth. And so far as I know my own heart, it was from hence that I formerly led this church to some measures, for the suppressing vice among our young people, which gave so great offence, and by which I became so obnoxious. I have sought the good, and not the hurt of our young people. I have desired their truest honor and happiness, and not their reproach; knowing that true virtue and religion tended not only to the glory and felicity of young people in another world, but their greatest peace and prosperity, and highest dignity and honor in this world; and above all things to sweeten, and render pleasant and delightful, even the days of youth.

But whether I have loved you, and sought your good more or less, yet God in his providence, now calling me to part with you, committing your souls to him who once committed the pastoral care of them to me, nothing remains, but only (as I am now taking my leave of you) earnestly to beseech you, from love to yourselves, if you have none to me, not to despise and forget the warnings and counsels I have so often given you; remembering the day when you and I must meet again before the great Judge of quick and dead; when it will appear whether the things I have taught you were true, whether the counsels I have given you were good, and whether I truly sought your good, and whether you have well improved my endeavors.

I have, from time to time, earnestly warned you against frolicking, (as it is called) and some other liberties commonly taken by young people in the land. And whatever some may say in justification of such liberties and customs, and may laugh at warnings against them, I now leave you my parting testimony against such things; not doubting but God will approve and confirm it in that day when we shall meet before him.

V. I would apply myself to the children of the congregation, the lambs of this flock, who have been so long under my care.

I have just now said that I have had a peculiar concern for the young people; and in so saying I did not intend to exclude you. You are in youth, and in the most early youth: And therefore I have been sensible that if those that were young had a precious opportunity for their souls' good, you who are very young had, in many respects, a peculiarly precious opportunity. And accordingly I have not neglected you: I have endeavored to do the part of a faithful shepherd, in feeding the lambs as well as the sheep. Christ did once commit the care of your souls to me as your minister; and you know, dear children, how I have instructed you, and warned you from time to time: You know how I have often called you together for that end; and some of you, sometimes, have seemed to be affected with what I have said to you. But I am afraid it has had no saving effects as to many of you; but that you remain still in an unconverted condition, without any real saving work wrought in your souls, convincing you thoroughly of your sin and misery, causing you to see the great evil of sin, and to mourn for it, and hate it above all things, and giving you a sense of the excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ, bringing you with all your hearts to cleave to him as your Saviour, weaning your hearts from the world and causing you to love God above all, and to delight in holiness more than in all the pleasant things of this earth: And so that I now leave you in a miserable condition, having no interest in Christ, and so under the awful displeasure and anger of God, and in danger of going down to the pit of eternal misery.

But now I must bid you farewell: I must leave you in the hands of God: I can do no more for you than to pray for you. Only I desire you not to forget, but often think of the counsels and warnings I have given you, and the endeavors I have used, that your souls might be saved from everlasting destruction.

Dear children, I leave you in an evil world, that is full of snares and temptations. God only knows what will become of you. This the scripture hath told us, that there are but few saved; and we have abundant confirmation of it from what we see. This we see, that children die as well as others: Multitudes die before they grow up; and of those that grow up, comparatively few ever give good evidence of saving conversion to God. I pray God to pity you, and take care of you, and provide for you the best means for the good of your souls; and that God himself would undertake for you to be your heavenly Father, and the mighty Redeemer of your immortal souls. Do not neglect to pray for yourselves: Take heed you be not of the number of those who cast off fear, and restrain prayer before God. Constantly pray to God in secret; and often remember that great day when you must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and meet your minister there, who has so often counselled and warned you.

I conclude with a few words of advice to all in general, in some particulars, which are of great importance in order to the future welfare and prosperity of this church and congregation.

1. One thing that greatly concerns you, as you would be an happy people, is the maintaining of *family order*.

We have had great disputes how the church ought to be regulated; and indeed the subject of these disputes was of great importance: But the due regulation of your families is of no less, and, in some respects, of much greater importance. Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church, consecrated to Christ, and wholly influenced and governed by his rules. And family education and order are some of the chief of the means of grace. If these fail, all other means are like to prove ineffectual. If these are duly maintained, all the means of grace will be like to prosper and be successful.

Let me now therefore, once more, before I finally cease to speak to this congregation, repeat, and earnestly press the counsel which I have often urged on heads of families here,

while I was their pastor, to great painfulness, in teaching, warning, and directing their children; bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; beginning early, when there is yet opportunity, and maintaining a constant diligence in labors of this kind: Remembering that, as you would not have all your instructions and counsels ineffectual, there must be government as well as instructions, which must be maintained with an even hand, and steady resolution, as a guard to the religion and morals of the family, and the support of its good order. Take heed that it be not with any of you as with Eli of old, who reproved his children but restrained them not; and that, by this means, you do not bring the like curse on your families as he did on his.

And let children obey their parents, and yield to their instructions, and submit to their orders, as they would inherit a blessing and not a curse. For we have reason to think, from many things in the word of God, that nothing has a greater tendency to bring a curse on persons in this world, and on all their temporal concerns, than an undutiful, unsubmissive, disorderly behavior in children towards their parents.

2. As you would seek the future prosperity of this society it is of vast importance that you should avoid contention.

A contentious people will be a miserable people. The contentions which have been among you, since I first became your pastor, have been one of the greatest burdens I have labored under in the course of my ministry: Not only the contentions you have had with me, but those which you have had one with another, about your lands and other concerns. Because I knew that contention, heat of spirit, evil speaking, and things of the like nature, were directly contrary to the spirit of Christianity, and did in a peculiar manner, tend to drive away God's Spirit from a people, and to render all means of grace ineffectual, as well as to destroy a people's outward comfort and welfare.

Let me therefore earnestly exhort you, as you would seek your own future good hereafter to watch against a contentious spirit. "If you would see good days, seek peace, and ensue it." 1 Pet. iii. 10. 11. Let the contention, which has

lately been about the terms of Christian communion, as it has been the greatest of your contentions, so be the last of them. I would, now I am preaching my farewell sermon, say to you, as the Apostle to the Corinthians, 2 Cor. xiii. 11.: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect: Be of one mind: Live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

And here I would particularly advise those that have adhered to me in the late controversy, to watch over their spirits, and avoid all bitterness towards others. Your temptations are, in some respects, the greatest; because what has been lately done is grievous to you. But however wrong you may think others have done, maintain, with great diligence and watchfulness, a Christian meekness and sedateness of spirit; and labor, in this respect, to excel others who are of the contrary part. And this will be the best victory: For "he that rules his spirit, is better than he that takes a city." Therefore let nothing be done through strife or vain glory. Indulge no revengeful spirit in any wise; but watch and pray against it; and, by all means in your power, seek the prosperity of this town: And never think you behave yourselves as becomes Christians, but when you sincerely, sensibly, and fervently love all men, of whatever party or opinion, and whether friendly or unkind, just or injurious, to you or your friends, or to the cause and kingdom of Christ.

3. Another thing that vastly concerns the future prosperity of this town, is, that you should watch against the encroachments of error; and particularly Arminianism, and doctrines of like tendency.

You were, many of you, as I well remember, much alarmed with the apprehension of the danger of the prevailing of these corrupt principles, near sixteen years ago. But the danger then was small in comparison of what appears now. These doctrines at this day are much more prevalent than they were then: The progress they have made in the land, within this seven years, seems to have been vastly greater than at any time in the like space before: And they are still prevailing and creeping into almost all parts of the land, threatening the utter ruin of the credit of those doctrines

which are the peculiar glory of the gospel, and the interests of vital piety. And I have of late perceived some things among yourselves, that shew that you are far from being out of danger, but on the contrary remarkably exposed. The older people may perhaps think themselves sufficiently fortified against infection: But it is fit that all should beware of self-confidence and carnal security, and should remember those needful warnings of sacred writ, "Be not high minded, but fear; and let him that stands, take heed lest he fall." But let the case of the older people be as it will, the rising generation are doubtless greatly exposed. These principles are exceeding taking with corrupt nature, and are what young people, at least such as have not their hearts established with grace, are easily led away with.

And if these principles should greatly prevail in this town, as they very lately have done in another large town I could name, formerly greatly noted for religion, and so for a long time, it will threaten the spiritual and eternal ruin of this people, in the present and future generations. Therefore you have need of the greatest and most diligent care and watchfulness with respect to this matter.

4. Another thing which I would advise to, that you may hereafter be a prosperous people, is, that you would give yourselves much to prayer.

God is the fountain of all blessing and prosperity, and he will be sought to for his blessing. I would therefore advise you not only to be constant in secret and family prayer, and in the public worship of God in his house, but also often to assemble yourselves in private praying societies. I would advise all such as are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, and sensibly affected with the calamities of this town, of whatever opinion they be with relation to the subject of our late controversy, often to meet together for prayer, and to cry to God for his mercy to themselves, and mercy to this town, and mercy to Zion and the people of God in general through the world.

5. The last article of advice I would give (which doubtless does greatly concern your prosperity) is, that you would take

great care with regard to the settlement of a minister, to see to it who, or what manner of person he is that you settle; and particularly in these two respects.

(1.) That he be a man of thoroughly sound principles in the scheme of doctrine which he maintains.

This you will stand in the greatest need of, especially at such a day of corruption as this is. And in order to obtain such a one, you had need to exercise extraordinary care and prudence. I know the danger. I know the manner of many young gentlemen of corrupt principles, their ways of concealing themselves, the fair specious disguises they are wont to put on, by which they deceive others, to maintain their own credit, and get themselves into others' confidence and improvement, and secure and establish their own interest, until they see a convenient opportunity to begin more openly to broach and propagate their corrupt tenets.

(2) Labor to obtain a man who has an established character, as a person of serious religion and fervent piety.

It is of vast importance that those who are settled in this work should be men of true piety, at all times, and in all places; but more especially at sometimes, and in some towns and churches. And this present time, which is a time wherein religion is in danger, by so many corruptions in doctrine and practice, is in a peculiar manner a day wherein such ministers are necessary. Nothing else but sincere piety of heart is at all to be depended on, at such a time as this, as a security to a young man, just coming into the world, from the prevailing infection, or thoroughly to engage him in proper and successful endeavors to withstand and oppose the torrent of error, and prejudice, against the high, mysterious, evangelical doctrines of the religion of Jesus Christ, and their genuine effects in true experimental religion. And this place is a place that does peculiarly need such a minister, for reasons obvious to all.

If you should happen to settle a minister who knows nothing truly of Christ, and the way of salvation by him, nothing experimentally of the nature of vital religion; alas, how will you be exposed as sheep without a shepherd! Here is need

of one in this place, who shall be eminently fit to stand in the gap, and make up the hedge, and who shall be as the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. You need one that shall stand as a champion in the cause of truth and the power of godliness.

Having briefly mentioned these important articles of advice, nothing remains, but that I now take my leave of you, and bid you all *farewell;* wishing and praying for your best prosperity. I would now commend your immortal souls to Him, who formerly committed them to me, expecting the day, when I must meet you again before Him, who is the Judge of quick and dead. I desire that I may never forget this people, who have been so long my special charge, and that I may never cease fervently to pray for your prosperity. May God bless you with a faithful pastor, one that is well acquainted with his mind and will, thoroughly warning sinners, wisely and skilfully searching professors, and conducting you in the way to eternal blessedness. May you have truly a burning and shining light set up in this candlestick; and may you, not only for a season, but during his whole life, and that a long life, be willing to rejoice in his light.

And let me be remembered in the prayers of all God's people that are of a calm spirit, and are peaceable and faithful in Israel, of whatever opinion they may be with respect to terms of church communion.

And let us all remember, and never forget our future solemn meeting on that great day of the Lord; the day of infallible decision, and of the everlasting and unalterable sentence.

AMEN.

## THE RESULT OF A COUNCIL OF NINE CHURCHES, MET AT NORTHAMPTON, JUNE 22, 1750.

*AT A COUNCIL OF NINE CHURCHES, VIZ.*

THE church in Enfield, Rev. Peter Reynolds, pastor; Mr. Edward Collins, delegate.

Sheffield, Jonathan Hubbard, pastor; Mr. Daniel Kellogg, delegate.

Sutton, David Hall, pastor; Mr. Jonathan Hall, delegate.

Reading, William Hobby, pastor; Mr. Samuel Bancroft, delegate.

The first church in Springfield, Robert Breck, pastor; Mr. Thomas Stebbins, delegate.

Sunderland, Joseph Ashley, pastor; Mr. Samuel Montague, delegate.

Hatfield, Timothy Woodbridge, pastor; Oliver Partridge, Esq. delegate.

The first church in Hadley, Chester Williams, pastor; Mr. Enos Nash, delegate.

Pelham, Robert Abercrombie, pastor; Mr. Matthew Gray, delegate.

CONVENED at the call of the first church in Northampton, together with the elder of the church in Cold Spring,* added by the consent of both the pastor and church of Northampton, in order to advise to a remedy from the calamities arising from the unsettled, broken state of the first church in Northampton, by reason of a controversy subsisting about the qualifications for full communion in the church.

The Reverend Mr. Hubbard was chosen moderator, and the Reverend Mr. Williams scribe.

The council, after seeking the divine presence and direction, had the matter in controversy laid before them, and finding the sentiments of the pastor and church concerning

* Reverend Mr. Billing.

the qualifications necessary for full communion, to be diametrically opposite to each other; the pastor insisting upon it as necessary to the admission of members to full communion, that they should make a profession of sanctifying grace; whereas the brethren are of opinion that the Lord's supper is a converting ordinance, and consequently that persons, if they have a competency of knowledge and are of a blameless life, may be admitted to the Lord's table, although they make no such profession: And also finding that, by reason of this diversity of sentiments, the doors of the church have been some years, so that there has been no admission: And not being able to find out any method wherein the pastor and brethren can unite; consistent with their own sentiments, in admitting members to full communion: The council did then, according to the desire of the church, expressed in their letters missive, proceed to consider of the expediency of dissolving the relation between pastor and people; and, after hearing the church upon it, and mature deliberation of the case, the questions were put to the members of the council severally;

1. Whether it be the opinion of this council that the reverend Mr Edwards, persisting in his principles, and the church in theirs in opposition to his, and insisting on a separation, it is necessary that the relation between pastor and people be dissolved? *Resolved in the affirmative.*
2. Whether it be expedient that this relation be immediately dissolved? *Passed in the affirmative.*

However, we take notice that notwithstanding the unhappy dispute which has arisen, and so long subsisted between the pastor and church of Northampton, upon the point before mentioned, we have had no other objection against him, but what relates to his sentiments upon the point aforesaid, laid before us: And although we have heard of some stories spread abroad, reflecting upon Mr. Edwards' sincerity with regard to the change of his sentiments about the qualifications for full communion; yet we have received full satisfaction that they are false and groundless: And although we do not all of us agree with Mr. Edwards in our sentiments upon the

# PREFACE.

*MY appearing in this public manner on that side of the question, which is defended in the following sheets, will probably be surprising to many, as it is well known, that Mr. Stoddard, so great and eminent a divine, and my venerable predecessor in the pastoral office over the church in Northampton, as well as my own grandfather, publicly and strenuously appeared in opposition to the doctrine here maintained.*

*However, I hope, it will not be taken amiss, that I think as I do, merely because I herein differ from him, though so much my superior, and one whose name and memory I am under distinguishing obligations on every account, to treat with great respect and honor. Especially may I justly expect, that it will not be charged on me as a crime, that I do not think in every thing just as he did, since none more than he himself asserted this scriptural and Protestant maxim, that we ought to* call no man on earth Master, *or make the authority of the greatest and holiest of mere men the ground of our belief of any doctrine in religion. Certainly we are not obliged to think any man infallible, who himself utterly disclaims infallibility. Very justly Mr. Stoddard observes in his* Appeal to the Learned, *p. 97, "All Protestants agree that there is no infallibility at Rome; and I know nobody else that pretends to any since the apostles' days." And he insists in his preface to his sermon on the same subject, That it argues no want of due respect in us to our forefathers, for us to examine their opinions. Some of his words in that preface contain a good apology for me, and are worthy to be repeated on this occasion. They are as follow:*

*"It may possibly be a fault (says Mr. Stoddard) to depart from the ways of our fathers: But it may also be a virtue, and an eminent act of obedience, to depart from them in some things,*

*Men are wont to make a great noise, that we are bringing in innovations, and depart from the old way: But it is beyond me to find out wherein the iniquity does lie. We may see cause to alter some practices of our fathers, without despising of them, without priding ourselves in our wisdom, without apostacy, without abusing the advantages God has given us, without a spirit of compliance with corrupt men, without inclination to superstition, without making disturbance in the church of God: And there is no reason, that it should be turned as a reproach upon us. Surely it is commendable for us to examine the practices of our fathers; we have no sufficient reason to take practices upon trust from them. Let them have as high a character as belongs to them; yet we may not look upon their principles as oracles. Nathan himself missed it in his conjecture about building the house of God. He that believes principles because* they *affirm them, makes* idols *of them. And it would be no humility, but baseness of spirit, for us to judge ourselves incapable to examine the principles that have been handed down to us. If we be by any means fit to open the mysteries of the gospel, we are capable to judge of these matters: And it would ill become us, so to indulge ourselves in ease, as to neglect the examination of received principles. If the practices of our fathers in any particulars were mistaken, it is fit that they should be rejected; if they be not, they will bear examination. If we be forbidden to examine their practice, that will cut off all hopes of reformation."*

*Thus in these very seasonable and apposite sayings, Mr. Stoddard, though dead, yet speaketh: And here (to apply them to my own case) he tells me, that I am not at all blameable, for not taking his principles on trust; that notwithstanding the high character justly belonging to him, I ought not to look on his principles as oracles, as though he could not miss it, as well as Nathan himself in his conjecture about building the house of God; nay, surely that I am even to be commended, for examining his practice, and judging for myself; that it would ill become me, to do otherwise; that this would be no manifestation of humility, but rather shew a baseness of spirit; that if I be not capable to judge for myself in these matters, I am by no means fit to open the mysteries of the gospel; that if I should believe his princi-*

*ples, because he advanced them, I should be guilty of making him an idol. Also he tells his and my flock, with all others, that it ill becomes them, so to indulge their ease, as to neglect examining received principles and practices; and that it is fit, mistakes in any particulars be rejected: That if in some things I differ in my judgment from him, it would be very unreasonable, on this account to make a great noise, as though I were bringing in innovations, and departing from the old way; that I may see cause to alter some practices of my grandfather and predecessor, without despising him, without priding myself in my wisdom, without apostasy, without despising the advantages God has given me, without inclination to superstition, and without making disturbance in the church of God; in short, that it is beyond him, to find out wherein the iniquity of my so doing lies; and that there is no reason why it should be turned as a reproach upon me. Thus, I think, he sufficiently vindicates my conduct in the present case, and warns all with whom I am concerned, not to be at all displeased with me, or to find the least fault with me, merely because I examine for myself, have a judgment of my own, and am for practising in some particulars different from him, how positive soever he was that his judgment and practice were right. It is reasonably hoped and expected, that they who have a great regard to his judgment, will impartially regard his judgment, and hearken to his admonition in these things.*

*I can seriously declare, that an affectation of making a shew as if I were something wiser than that excellent person, is exceeding distant from me, and very far from having the least influence in my appearing to oppose, in this way of the press, an opinion which he so earnestly maintained and promoted. Sure I am, I have not affected to vary from his judgment, nor in the least been governed by a spirit of contradiction, neither indulged a cavilling humor, in remarking on any of his arguments or expressions.*

*I have formerly been of his opinion, which I imbibed from his books, even from my childhood, and have in my proceedings conformed to his practice; though never without some difficulties in my view, which I could not solve: Yet, however, a distrust of my own understanding, and deference to the authority of so venerable a man, the seeming strength of some of his arguments, togeth-*

*er with the success he had in his ministry, and his great reputation and influence, prevailed for a long time to bear down my scruples. But the difficulties and uneasiness on my mind increasing, as I became more studied in divinity, and as I improved in experience; this brought me to closer diligence and care to search the scriptures, and more impartially to examine and weigh the arguments of my grandfather, and such other authors as I could get on his side of the question. By which means, after long searching, pondering, viewing and reviewing, I gained satisfaction, became fully settled in the opinion I now maintain, as in the discourse here offered to public view; and dared to proceed no further in a practice and administration inconsistent therewith: Which brought me into peculiar circumstances, laying me under an inevitable necessity publicly to declare and maintain the opinion I was thus established in; as also to do it from the press, and to do it at this time without delay. It is far from a pleasing circumstance of this publication, that it is against what my honored grandfather strenuously maintained, both from the pulpit and press. I can truly say, on account of this and some other considerations, it is what I engage in with the greatest reluctance, that ever I undertook any public service in my life. But the state of things with me is so ordered, by the sovereign disposal of the great governor of the world, that my doing this appeared to me very necessary and altogether unavoidable. I am conscious, not only is the interest of Religion concerned in this affair, but my own reputation, future usefulness, and my very subsistence, all seemed to depend on my freely opening and defending myself, as to my principles, and agreeable conduct in my pastoral charge; and on my doing it from the press: In which way alone am I able to state and justify my opinion, to any purpose, before the country (which is full of noise, misrepresentations, and many censures concerning this affair) or even before my own people, as all would be fully sensible, if they knew the exact state of the case.*

*I have been brought to this necessity in divine providence, by such a situation of affairs and coincidence of circumstances and events, as I choose at present to be silent about; and which it is not needful, nor perhaps expedient for me to publish to the World.*

*One thing among others that caused me to go about this business with so much backwardness, was the fear of a bad improvement some ill minded people might be ready, at this day, to make of the doctrine here defended; particularly that wild enthusiastical sort of people, who have of late gone into unjustifiable separations, even renouncing the ministers and churches of the land in general, under pretence of setting up a pure church. It is well known, that I have heretofore publicly remonstrated, both from the pulpit and press, against very many of the notions and practices of this kind of people; and shall be very sorry if what I now offer to the public, should be any occasion of their encouraging or strengthening themselves in those notions and practices of theirs. To prevent which, I would now take occasion to declare, I am still of the same mind concerning them, that I have formerly manifested. I have the same opinion concerning the religion and inward experiences chiefly in vogue among them, as I had when I wrote my* Treatise on Religious Affections, *and when I wrote my* Observations and Reflections on Mr. BRAINERD'S Life. *I have no better opinion of their notion of a pure church by means of a spirit of discerning, their censorious outcries against the standing ministers and churches in general, their Lay ordinations, their Lay preachings, and public exhortings, and administering Sacraments; their assuming, selfconfident, contentious, uncharitable, separating Spirit; their going about the country, as sent by the Lord, to make proselytes; with their many other extravagant and wicked ways. My holding the doctrine that is defended in this discourse, is no argument of any change of my opinion concerning them; for when I wrote those two books before mentioned, I was of the same mind concerning the qualifications of communicants at the Lord's Table, that I am of now.*

*However, it is not unlikely, that some will still exclaim against my principles, as being of the same pernicious tendency with those of the Separatists: To such I can only by a solemn protestation aver the sincerity of my aims, and the great care I have exercised to avoid whatsoever is erroneous, or might be in any respect mischievous. But as to my success in these my upright aims and endeavors, I must leave it to every reader to judge for himself, after he has carefully perused, and impartially considered*

*the following discourse; which, considering the nature and importance of the subject, I hope, all serious readers will accompany with their earnest prayers to the father of lights, for his gracious direction and influence. And, to him be glory in the churches by Christ Jesus.* AMEN.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

# HUMBLE INQUIRY.

## PART FIRST.

### *The Question stated and explained.*

THE main question I would consider, and for the negative of which, I would offer some arguments in the following discourse, is this: Whether, according to the rules of Christ, any ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church of Christ in complete standing, but such as are in profession, and in the eye of the church's Christian judgment, godly or gracious persons?

When I speak of members of the visible church of Christ, in complete standing, I would be understood of those who are received as the proper immediate subjects of all the external privileges, Christ has appointed for the ordinary members of his church. I say ordinary members, in distinction from any peculiar privileges and honors of church officers and rulers. All allow, there are some that are in some respect in the church of God, who are not members in complete standing, in the sense that has been explained: All that acknowledge infant baptism, allow infants, who are the proper subjects of baptism, and are baptized, to be in some sort members of the Christian church; yet none suppose them to be members in such standing as to be the proper immediate subjects of all ecclesiastical ordinances and privileges: But that some further qualifications are requisite in order to this, to be obtained, either in a course of nature, or by education, or by divine grace. And some who are baptized in infancy, even after they come to be adult, may yet remain for a season short of such a standing as has been spoken of; being destitute of sufficient knowledge, and perhaps some other qualifications,

through the neglect of parents, or their own negligence, or otherwise ; or because they carelessly neglect to qualify themselves for ecclesiastical privileges by making a public profession of the Christian faith, or owning the Christian covenant, or forbear to offer themselves as candidates for these privileges ; and yet not be cast out of the church, or cease to be in any respect its members : This, I suppose, will also be generally allowed.

One thing mainly intended in the foregoing question is, Whether any adult persons but such as are in profession and appearance endued with Christian grace or piety, ought to be admitted to the Christian Sacraments : Particularly whether they ought to be admitted to the Lord's supper ; and, if they are such as were not baptized in infancy, ought to be admitted to baptism. Adult persons having those qualifications that oblige others to receive them as the proper immediate subjects of the Christian sacraments, is a main thing intended in the question, by being such as ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church, in complete standing. There are many adult persons that by the allowance of all are in some respect within the church of God, who are not members in good standing, in this respect. There are many, for instance, that have not at present the qualifications proper to recommend them to admission to the Lord's supper : There are many scandalous persons, who are under suspension. The late venerable Mr. Stoddard, and many other great divines suppose, that even excommunicated persons are still members of the church of God ; and some suppose the worshippers of Baal in Israel, even those who were bred up such from their infancy, remained still members of the church of God : And very many Protestant divines suppose, that the members of the church of Rome, though they are brought up and live continually in gross idolatry, and innumerable errors and superstitions that tend utterly to make void the gospel of Christ, still are in the visible church of Christ : Yet, I suppose, no orthodox divines would hold these to be properly and regularly qualified for the Lord's supper. It was therefore requisite, in the question before us, that a

distinction should be made between members of the visible church in general, and members in complete standing.

It was also requisite that such a distinction should be made in the question, to avoid lengthening out this discourse exceedingly with needless questions and debates concerning the state of baptized infants ; that it is, needless as to my present purpose. Though I have no doubts about the doctrine of infant baptism ; yet God's manner of dealing with such infants as are regularly dedicated to him in baptism, is a matter liable to great disputes and many controversies, and would require a large dissertation by itself to clear it up ; which, as it would extend this discourse beyond all bounds, so it appears not necessary in order to a clear determination of the present question. The revelation of God's word is much plainer and more express concerning adult persons, that act for themselves in religious matters, than concerning infants. The scriptures were written for the sake of adult persons, or those that are capable of knowing what is written : It is to such the apostles speak in their epistles, and to such only does God speak throughout his word : And the scriptures especially speak for the sake of those, and about those to whom they speak. And therefore if the word of God affords us light enough concerning those spoken of in the question, as I have stated it, clearly to determine the matter with respect to them, we need not wait until we see all doubts and controversies about baptized infants cleared and settled, before we pass a judgment with respect to the point in hand. The denominations, characters, and descriptions, which we find given in Scripture to visible Christians, and to the visible church, are principally with an eye to the church of Christ in its adult state and proper standing. If any one was about to describe that kind of birds called Doves, it would be most proper to describe grown doves, and not young ones in the egg or nest, without wings or feathers : So if any one should describe a palmtree or olivetree by its visible form and appearance, it would be presumed that he described those of these kinds of trees in their mature and proper state ; and not as just peeping from the ground, or as thunder struck or blown down.

And therefore I would here give notice, once for all, that when in the ensuing discourse I use such like phrases as visible saints, members of the visible church, &c. I, for the most part, mean persons that are adult and in good standing.

The question is not, whether Christ has made converting grace or piety itself the condition or rule of his people's admitting any to the privileges of members in full communion with them: There is no one qualification of mind whatsoever, that Christ has properly made the term of this; not so much as a common belief that Jesus is the Messiah, or a belief of the being of a God. It is the credible profession and visibility of these things, that is the church's rule in this case. Christian piety or Godliness may be a qualification requisite to communion in the Christian sacraments, just in the same manner as a belief that Jesus is the Messiah, and the Scriptures the word of God, are requisite qualifications; and in the same manner as some kind of repentance is a qualification requisite in one that has been suspended for being grossly scandalous, in order to his coming again to the Lord's supper; and yet godliness itself not be properly the rule of the church's proceeding, in like manner as such a belief and repentance, as I have mentioned, are not their rule. It is a visibility to the eye of a Christian judgment, that is the rule of the church's proceeding in each of these cases.

Two distinctions must be here observed. As, 1. We must distinguish between such qualifications as are requisite to give a person a right to ecclesiastical privileges in *foro ecclesiæ*, or a right to be admitted by the church to those privileges, and those qualifications that are a proper and good foundation for a man's own conduct in coming and offering himself as a candidate for immediate admission to these privileges: There is a difference between these. Thus, for instance, a profession of the belief of a future state and of revealed religion, and some other things that are internal and out of sight, and a visibility of these things to the eye of a Christian judgment, is all, relating to these things, that is requisite to give a man a right in *foro ecclesiæ*, or before the church; but it is the real existence of these things, that is what lays a

proper and good foundation for his making this profession, and so demanding these privileges. None will suppose, that he has good and proper ground for such a conduct, who does not believe another world, nor believe the Bible to be the word of God. And then,

2. We must distinguish between that which nextly brings an obligation on a man's conscience to seek admission to a Christian ordinance, and that which is a good foundation for the dictate of an enlightened well informed conscience, and so is properly a solid foundation of a right in him to act thus. Certainly this distinction does really take place among mankind in innumerable cases. The dictates of men's consciences are what do bring them under a next or most immediate obligation to act: But it is that which is a good foundation for such a dictate of an enlightened conscience, that alone is a solid foundation of a right in him so to act. A believing the doctrine of the Trinity with all the heart, in some sense (let us suppose a moral sense) is one thing requisite in order to a person's having a solid foundation of a right in him to go and demand baptism in the name of the Trinity: But his best judgment or dictate of his conscience, concerning his believing this doctrine with this sincerity, or with all his heart, may be sufficient to bring an obligation on his conscience. Again, when a delinquent has been convicted of scandal, it is repentance in some respect sincere (suppose a moral sincerity) that is the proper foundation of a right in him to offer himself for forgiveness and restoration: But it is the dictate of his conscience or his best judgment concerning his sincerity, that is the thing which immediately obliges him to offer himself. It is repentance itself, that is the proper qualification fundamental of his right, and what he cannot have a proper right without; for though he may be deceived, and think he has real repentance when he has not, yet he has not properly a right to be deceived; and perhaps deceit in such cases is always owing to something blameable, or the influence of some corrupt principle: But yet his best judgment brings him under obligation. In the same manner, and no otherwise, I suppose that Christian grace itself is a qualification requisite in order

to a proper solid ground of a right in a person to come to the Christian sacraments. But of this I may say something more when I come to answer objections.

When I speak, in the question, of a being godly or gracious in the eye of a Christian judgment, by Christian judgment I intend something further than a kind of mere negative charity, implying that we forbear to censure and condemn a man, because we do not know but that he may be godly, and therefore forbear to proceed on the foot of such a censure or judgment in our treatment of him: As we would kindly entertain a stranger, not knowing but in so doing we entertain an angel or precious saint of God. But I mean a positive judgment, founded on some positive appearance, or visibility, some outward manifestations that ordinarily render the thing probable. There is a difference between suspending our judgment, or forbearing to condemn, or having some hope that possibly the thing may be so, and so hoping the best; and a positive judgment in favor of a person. For an having some hope, only implies that a man is not in utter despair of a thing, though his prevailing opinion may be otherwise, or he may suspend his opinion. Though we cannot know a man believes that Jesus is the Messiah, yet we expect some positive manifestation or visibility of it, to be a ground of our charitable judgment: So I suppose the case is here.

When I speak of Christian judgment, I mean a judgment wherein men do properly exercise reason, and have their reason under the due influence of love and other Christian principles; which do not blind reason, but regulate its exercises; being not contrary to reason, though they be very contrary to censoriousness or unreasonable niceness and rigidness.

I say in the eye of the church's Christian judgment, because it is properly a visibility to the eye of the public charity, and not of a private judgment, that gives a person a right to be received as a visible saint by the public. If any are known to be persons of an honest character, and appear to be of good understanding in the doctrines of Christianity, and particularly those doctrines that teach the grand condition of salvation,

and the nature of true saving religion, and publicly and seriously profess the great and main things wherein the essence of true religion or godliness consists, and their conversation is agreeable; this justly recommends them to the good opinion of the public, whatever suspicions and fears any particular person, either the minister or some other, may entertain, from what he in particular has observed, perhaps from the manner of his expressing himself in giving an account of his experiences or an obscurity in the order and method of his experiences, &c. The minister, in receiving him to the communion of the church, is to act as a public officer, and in behalf of the public society, and not merely for himself, and therefore is to be governed in acting, by a proper visibility of godliness in the eye of the public.

It is not my design, in holding the negative of the foregoing question, to affirm, that all who are regularly admitted as members of the visible church in complete standing, ought to be believed to be godly or gracious persons, when taken collectively, or considered in the gross, by the judgment of any person or society. This may not be, and yet each person taken singly may visibly be a gracious person to the eye of the judgment of Christians in general. These two are not the same thing, but vastly diverse; and the latter may be, and yet not the former. If we should know so much of a thousand persons one after another, and from what we observed in them should have a prevailing opinion concerning each one of them, singly taken, that they were indeed pious, and think the judgment we passed, when we consider each judgment apart, to be right; it will not follow, when we consider the whole company collectively, that we shall have so high an opinion of our own judgment, as to think it probable, there was not one erroneous judgment in the whole thousand. We all have innumerable judgments about one thing or other, concerning religious, moral, secular, and philosophical affairs, concerning past, present, and future matters, reports, facts, persons, things, &c. &c. And concerning all the many thousand dictates of judgment that we have, we think them every

one right, taken singly; for if there was any one that we thought wrong, it would not be our judgment; and yet there is no man, unless he is stupidly foolish, who when he considers all in the gross, will say he thinks that every opinion he is of, concerning all persons and things whatsoever, important and trifling, is right, without the least error. But the more clearly to illustrate this matter, as it relates to visibility, or probable appearances of holiness in professors: Supposing it had been found by experience concerning precious stones, that such and such external marks were probable signs of a diamond, and it is made evident, by putting together a great number of experiments, that the probability is as ten to one, and no more nor less; i. e. that, take one time with another, there is one in ten of the stones that have these marks (and no visible signs to the contrary) proves not a true diamond, and no more; then it will follow, that when I find a particular stone with these marks, and nothing to the contrary, there is a probability of ten to one, concerning that stone that it is a diamond; and so concerning each stone that I find with these marks: But if we take ten of these together, it is as probable as not, that some one of the ten is spurious; because, if it were not as likely as not, that one in ten is false, or if taking one ten with another, there were not one in ten that was false, then the probability of those, that have these marks, being true diamonds, would be more than ten to one, contrary to the supposition; because that is what we mean by a probability of ten to one, that they are not false, viz. that take one ten with another there will be one false stone among them, and no more. Hence if we take an hundred such stones together, the probability will be just ten to one, that there is one false among them; and as likely as not that there are ten false ones in the whole hundred: And the probability of the individuals must be much greater than ten to one, even a probability of more than a hundred to one, in order to its making it probable that every one is true. It is an easy mathematical demonstration. Hence the negative of the foregoing question by no means implies a pretence of any scheme, that shall be effectu-

al to keep all hypocrites out of the church, and for the establishing in that sense a pure church.

When it is said, those who are admitted, &c. ought to be by profession godly or gracious persons, it is not meant, they should merely profess or say that they are converted, or are gracious persons, that they know so, or think so; but that they profess the great things wherein Christian piety consists, viz. a supreme respect to God, faith in Christ, &c. Indeed it is necessary, as men would keep a good conscience, that they should think that these things are in them, which they profess to be in them; otherwise they are guilty of the horrid wickedness of wilfully making a lying profession. Hence it is supposed to be necessary, in order to men's regularly and with a good conscience coming into communion with the church of Christ in the Christian sacraments, that they themselves should suppose the essential things, belonging to Christian piety, to be in them.

It does not belong to the present question, to consider and determine what the nature of Christian piety is, or wherein it consists. This question may be properly determined, and the determination demonstrated, without entering into any controversies about the nature of conversion, &c. Nor does an asserting the negative of the question determine any thing how particular the profession of godliness ought to be, but only, that the more essential things, which belong to it, ought to be professed. Nor is it determined, but that the public professions made on occasion of persons' admission to the Lord's supper, in some of our churches, who yet go upon that principle, that persons need not esteem themselves truly gracious in order to a coming conscientiously and properly to the Lord's supper; I say, it is not determined but that some of these professions are sufficient, if those that made them were taught to use the words, and others to understand them, in no other than their proper meaning; and principle and custom had not established a meaning very diverse from it, or perhaps an use of the words without any distinct and clear determinate meaning.

## PART SECOND.

### *Reasons for the Negative of the foregoing Question.*

HAVING thus explained what I mean, when I say, That none ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church of Christ in complete standing, but such as are in profession and in the eye of the church's Christian judgment, godly or gracious persons: I now proceed to observe some things which may tend to evince the truth of this position. And here,

I. I begin with observing, I think it is both evident by the word of God, and also granted on all hands, that none ought to be admitted as members of the visible church of Christ but visible saints and professing saints, or visible and professing Christians. We find the word saint, when applied to men, used two ways in the New Testament. The word in some places is so used as to mean those that are real saints, who are converted, and are truly gracious persons; as 1 Cor. vi. 2. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" Eph. i. 18. "The riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Chap. iii. 17, 18. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth," &c. 2 Thess. i. 10. "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." So Rev. v. 8. Chap. viii. 4, and xi. 18, and xiii. 10, and xiv. 12, and xix. 8. In other places the word is used so as to have respect not only to real saints, but to such as were saints in visibility, appearance, and profession; and so were outwardly, as to what concerns their acceptance among men and their outward treatment and privileges, of the company of saints. So the word is used in very many places, which it is needless to mention, as every one acknowledges it.

In like manner we find the word Christian used two ways. The word is used to express the same thing as a righteous man that shall be saved," 1 Pet. iv. 16, 17, 18. Elsewhere

it is so used as to take in all that were Christians by profession and outward appearance; Acts xi. 26. So there is a twofold use of the word disciples in the New Testament. There were disciples in name, profession, and appearance; and there were those whom Christ calls disciples indeed, John viii. 30, 31. The word is ἀληθῶς, *truly*. The expression plainly supposes this distinction of true or real disciples, and those who were the same in pretence and appearance. See also Luke xiv. 25, 26, 27, and John xv. 8. The same distinction is signified, in the New Testament, by those that live, being alive from the dead, and risen with Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 11, Rom. vi. 11, and elsewhere) and those who have a name to live, having only a pretence and appearance of life. And the distinction of the visible church of Christ into these two, is plainly signified of the growth of the good ground, and that in the stony and thorny ground, which had the same appearance and show with the other, until it came to wither away; and also by the two sorts of virgins, Matth. xxv. who both had a shew, profession, and visibility of the same thing. By these things and many others which might be observed, it appears that the distinction of real saints and visible and professing saints is scriptural, and that the visible church was made up of these two, and that none are according to Scripture admitted into the visible church of Christ, but those who are visible and professing saints or Christians. And it is the more needless to insist longer upon it, because it is not a thing in controversy. So far as my small reading will inform me, it is owned by all Protestants. To be sure, the most eminent divine in New-england, who has appeared to maintain the Lord's supper to be properly a converting ordinance, was very full in it. In his *Appeal to the Learned*, in the title page, and through the Treatise, he supposes that all who come to the Lord's supper, must be visible saints, and sometimes speaks of them as professing saints, page 85, 86: And supposes that it is requisite in order to their being admitted to the communion of the Lord's table, that they make a personal, public profession of their faith and repentance to the just satisfaction of the church,

page 93, 94. In these things the whole of the position that I would prove is in effect granted. If it be allowed (as it is allowed on all sides) that none ought to be admitted to the communion of the Christian visible church, but visible and professing saints or Christians; if these words are used in any propriety of speech, or in any agreement with Scripture representations, the whole of that which I have laid down is either implied or will certainly follow.

As real saints are the same with real converts, or really gracious persons, so visible saints are the same with visible converts, or those that are visibly converted and gracious persons. Visibility is the same with manifestation or appearance to our view and apprehension. And, therefore, to be visibly a gracious person, is the same thing as to be a truly gracious person to our view, apprehension, or esteem. The distinction of *real* and *visible* does not only take place with regard to saintship or holiness, but with regard to innumerable other things. There is visible and real truth, visible and real honesty, visible and real money, visible and real gold, visible and real diamonds, &c. &c. *Visible* and *real* are words that stand related one to another, as the words *real* and *seeming*, or *true* and *apparent*. Some seem to speak of visibility with regard to saintship or holiness, as though it had no reference to the reality, or as though it were a distinct reality by itself, as though by visible saints were not meant those who to appearance are real saints or disciples indeed, but properly a distinct sort of saints, which is an absurdity. There is a distinction between real money and visible money, because all that is esteemed money and passes for money, is not real money, but some is false and counterfeit. But yet by visible money, is not meant that which is taken and passes for a different sort of money from true money, but thereby is meant that which is esteemed and taken as real money, or which has that appearance that recommends it to men's judgment and acceptance as true money; though men may be deceived, and some of it may finally prove not to be so.

There are not properly two sorts of saints spoken of in scripture: Though the word saints may be said indeed to be

used two ways in scripture, or used so as to reach two sorts of persons; yet the word has not properly two significations in the New Testament, any more than the word *gold* has two significations among us. The word gold among us is so used as to extend to several sorts of substances; it is true, it extends to true gold, and also to that which only appears to be gold, and is reputed gold, and by that appearance or visibility some things that are not real gold obtain the name of gold; but this is not properly through a diversity in the signification of the word, but by a diversity of the application of it, through the imperfection of our discerning. It does not follow that there are properly two sorts of saints, because there are some who are not real saints, that yet being visible or seeming saints do by the shew and appearance they make obtain the name of saints, and are reputed saints, and whom by the rules of scripture (which are accommodated to our imperfect state) we are directed to receive and treat as saints; any more than it follows that there are two sorts of honest men, because some who are not truly honest men, yet being so seemingly or visibly, do obtain the name of honest men, and ought to be treated by us as such. So there are not properly two distinct churches of Christ, one the real, and another the visible; though they that are visibly or seemingly of the one only church of Christ, are many more than they who are really of his church; and so the visible or seeming church is of larger extent than the real.

Visibility is a relative thing, and has relation to an eye that views or beholds. Visibility is the same as appearance or exhibition to the eye; and to be a visible saint is the same as to appear to be a real saint in the eye that beholds; not the eye of God, but the eye of man. Real saints or converts are those that are so in the eye of God; visible saints or converts are those who are so in the eye of man; not his bodily eye, for thus no man is a saint any more in the eye of a man than he is in the eye of a beast; but the eye of his mind, which is his judgment or esteem. There is no more visibility of holiness in the brightest professor to the eye of our bodies, without the exercise of the reason and judgment of our minds,

than may be in a machine. But nothing short of an apparent probability, or a probable exhibition, can amount to a visibility to the eye of man's reason or judgment. The eye which God has given to man is the eye of reason; and the eye of a Christian is reason sanctified, regulated, and enlightened, by a principle of Christian love. But it implies a contradiction to say, that that is visible to the eye of reason, which does not appear probable to reason. And if there be a man that is in this sense a visible saint, he is in the eye of a rational judgment a real saint. To say a man is visibly a saint, but not visibly a real saint, but only visibly a visible saint, is a very absurd way of speaking; it is as much as to say, he is to appearance an appearing saint; which is in effect to say nothing, and to use words without signification. The thing which must be visible and probable, in order to visible saintship, must be saintship itself, or real grace and true holiness; not visibility of saintship, not unregenerate morality, not mere moral sincerity. To pretend to, or in any respect to exhibit moral sincerity, makes nothing visible beyond what is pretended to, or exhibited: For a man to have that visibly, which if he had it really, and have nothing more, would not make him a real saint, is not to be visibly a saint.

Mr. Stoddard, in his *Appeal to the Learned*, seems to express the very same notion of visibility, and that visibility of saintship which is requisite to a person's coming to the Lord's Supper, that I have here expressed. In page 10, he makes a distinction between being visibly circumcised in heart, and being really so; evidently meaning by the latter saving conversion; and he allows the former, viz. a visibility of heart circumcision, to be necessary to a coming to the Lord's Supper. So that according to him, it is not a visibility of moral sincerity only, but a visibility of circumcision of heart, or saving conversion, that is a necessary requisite to a persons' coming to the Lord's table. And in what manner this must be visible, he signifies elsewhere, when he allows that it must be so to a judgment of charity; a judgment of rational charity. This he expressly allows over and over; as in page 2, 3, 28, 33, 72, and 95: And an having reason to look upon them as

such, page 28. And towards the close of his book, he declares himself stedfastly of the mind, that it is requisite those be not admitted to the Lord's Supper, who do not make a personal and public profession of their faith and repentance, to the just satisfaction of the church, page 93, 94. But how he reconciled these passages with the rest of his treatise, I would modestly say, I must confess myself at a loss. And particularly I cannot see how they consist with what this venerable and ever honored author says, page 16, in these words; "Indeed by the rule that God has given for admissions, if it be carefully attended, more unconverted persons will be admitted than converted." I would humbly inquire, how those visible qualifications can be the ground of a rational judgment, that a person is circumcised in heart, which nevertheless at the same time, we are sensible are so far from being any probable signs of it, that they are more frequently without it. The appearance of that thing surely cannot imply an appearing probability of another thing, which at the same time we are sensible is most frequently, and so most probably, without that other thing.

Indeed I can easily see, how that may seem visible, and appear probable to God's people by reason of the imperfect and dark state they are in, and so may oblige their charity, which yet is not real, and which would not appear at all probable to angels, who stand in a clearer light: And the different degrees of light, that God's church stands in, in different ages, may make a difference in this respect. The church under the New Testament being favored by God with a vastly greater light in divine things, than the church under the Old Testament. That might make some difference, as to the kind of profession of religion that is requisite, under these different dispensations, in order to a visibility of holiness; also a proper visibility may fail in the greater number in some extraordinary case, and in exempt circumstances: But how those signs can be a ground of a rational judgment that a thing is, which, at that very time, and under that degree of light we then have, we are sensible do oftener fail than not, and this ordinarily, I own myself much at a loss. Surely nothing but

appearing reason is the ground of a rational judgment. And indeed it is impossible in the nature of things, to form a judgment, which at that very time we think to be not only without, but against probability.

If it be said, that although persons do not profess that wherein sanctifying grace consists, yet seeing they profess to believe the doctrines of the gospel, which God is wont to make use of in order to men's sanctification, and are called the *doctrine which is according to godliness*; and since we see nothing in their lives to make us determine, that they have not had a proper effect on their hearts, we are obliged in charity to hope, that they are real saints, or gracious persons, and to treat them accordingly, and so to receive them into the Christian church, and to its special ordinances.

I answer, this objection does in effect suppose and grant the very thing mainly in dispute; for it supposes, that a gracious character is the thing that ought to be looked at and aimed at in admitting persons into the communion of the church; and so that it is needful to have this charity for persons, or such a favorable notion of them, in order to our receiving them as properly qualified members of the society, and properly qualified subjects of the special privileges they are admitted to. Whereas, the doctrine taught is, that sanctifying grace is not a necessary qualification herefor, and that there is no need that the person himself, or any other, should have any imagination, that he is a person so qualified; because we know, it is no qualification requisite in itself; we know the ordinance of the Lord's supper is as proper for them, that are not so qualified as for those that are; it being according to the design of the institution a converting ordinance, and so an ordinance as much intended for the good of the unconverted, as of the converted; even as it is with the preaching of the gospel. Now if the case be so, why is there any talk about a charitable hoping they are converted, and so admitting them? What need of any charitable hope of such a qualification, in order to admitting them to an ordinance that is as proper for those who are without this qualification, as for those that have it? We need not have any charitable hope of

any such qualification in order to admit a person to hear the word preached. What need have we to aim at any thing beyond the proper qualifications? And what manner of need of any charitable opinion or hope of any thing further? Some sort of belief, that Jesus is the Messiah, is a qualification properly requisite to a coming to the Lord's supper; and therefore it is necessary that we should have a charitable hope, that those have such a belief whom we admit; though it be not necessary that we should know it, it being what none can know of another. But as to grace or Christian piety, it clearly follows, on the principles which I oppose, that if there be any visibility of it, more or less, of any sort, yet no kind of visibility or appearance, whether more direct or indirect, whether to a greater or less degree, no charity or hope of it, have any thing at all to do in the affair of admission to the Lord's supper; for, according to them, it is properly a converting ordinance. What has any visibility or hope of a person's being already in health to do in admitting him into an hospital for the use of those means that are the proper appointed means for the healing of the sick, and bringing them to health? And therefore it is needless here to dispute about the nature of visibility; and all arguing concerning a profession of Christian doctrines, and an orderly life being a sufficient ground of public charity, and an obligation on the church to treat them as saints, are wholly impertinent and nothing to the purpose. For on the principles which I oppose, there is no need of any sort of ground for treating them as saints, in order to admitting them to the Lord's supper, the very design of which is to make them saints, any more than there is need of some ground of treating a sick man as being a man in health, in order to admitting him into an hospital. Persons, by the doctrine that I oppose, are not taught to offer themselves as candidates for church communion under any such notion, or with any such pretence, as their being gracious persons; and therefore surely when those that teach them, receive them to the ordinance, they do not receive them under any such notion, nor has any notion, appearance, hope or thought of it, any thing to do in the case.

The apostle speaks of the members of the Christian church, as those that made a profession of godliness. 2 Cor. ix. 13. "They glorified God for your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ." 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel....not with costly array; but, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works." The apostle is speaking of the women that were members of that great church of Ephesus, which Timothy for the present had the care of; and he speaks of them as supposing that they all professed godliness. By the allowance of all, profession is one thing belonging to the visibility of Christianity or holiness, that there is in the members of the visible church. Visible holiness is an appearance or exhibition of holiness, by those things which are external, and so fall under our notice and observation. And these are two, viz. profession and outward behavior, agreeable to that profession. That profession which belongs to visible saintship, must be a profession of godliness, or real saintship; for a profession makes nothing visible beyond what is professed. What is it, to be a saint by profession but to be by profession a true saint? For to be by profession a false saint, is to be by profession no saint; and only to profess that, which if ever so true, is nothing peculiar to a saint, is not to be a professing saint.

In order to a man's being properly a professing Christian, he must profess the religion of Jesus Christ: And he surely does not profess the religion that was taught by Jesus Christ, if he leaves out of his profession the most essential things that belong to that religion. That which is most essential in that religion itself, the profession of that is essential in a profession of that religion; for (as I have observed elsewhere) that which is most essential in a thing, in order to its being truly denominated that thing, the same is essentially necessary to be expressed or signified in any exhibition or declaration of that thing, in order to its being truly denominated a declaration or exhibition of that thing. If we take a more inconsiderable part of Christ's religion, and leave out the main and most essential, surely what we have cannot be properly call-

ed the religion of Jesus Christ: So if we profess only a less important part, and are silent about the most important and essential part, it cannot be properly said that we profess the religion of Jesus Christ. And therefore we cannot in any propriety be said to profess the Christian or Christ's religion, unless we profess those things wherein consists piety of heart, which is vastly the most important and essential part of that religion that Christ came to teach and establish in the world, and is in effect all; being that without which all the rest that belongs to it, is nothing, and wholly in vain. But they who are admitted to the Lord's supper, proceeding on the principles of those who hold it to be a converting ordinance, do in no respect profess Christian piety, neither in whole nor in part, neither explicitly nor implicitly, directly nor indirectly; and therefore are not professing Christians, or saints by profession. I mean, though they may be Godly persons, yet as they come to the ordinance without professing godliness, they cannot properly be called professing saints.

Here it may be said, that although no explicit and formal profession of those things which belong to true piety, be required of them; yet there are many things they do, that are a virtual and implicit profession of these things: Such as their owning the Christian covenant, their owning God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to be their God; and by their visibly joining in the public prayers and singing God's praises, there is a shew and implicit profession of supreme respect to God and love to him; by joining in the public confessions, they make a shew of repentance; by keeping sabbaths and hearing the word, they make a shew of a spirit of obedience; by offering to come to sacraments, they make a shew of love to Christ and a dependance on his sacrifice.

To this I answer: It is a great mistake, if any one imagines, that all these external performances are of the nature of a pofession of any thing at all that belongs to saving grace, as they are commonly used and understood: And to be sure none of them are so, according to the doctrines that are taught and embraced, and the customs that are established in such churches as proceed on the foot of the principles fore-

mentioned. For what is professing, but exhibiting, uttering, or declaring, either by intelligible words, or by other established signs that are equivalent? But in such churches, neither their publicly saying, that they avouch God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be their God, and that they give themselves up to him, and promise to obey all his commands, nor their coming to the Lord's supper, or to any other ordinances, are taken for expressions or signs of any thing belonging to the essence of Christian piety. But on the contrary, the public doctrine, principle, and custom in such churches establishes a diverse use of these words and signs. People are taught that they may use them all, and not so much as make any pretence to the least degree of sanctifying grace; and this is the established custom: So they are used, and so they are understood. And therefore whatever some of these words and signs may in themselves most properly and naturally import, or signify, they entirely cease to be significations of any such thing among people accustomed to understand and use them otherwise; and so cease to be of the nature of a profession of Christian piety. There can be no such thing among such a people, as either an explicit or implicit profession of Godliness by any thing which (by their established doctrine and custom) an unregenerate man may and ought to say and perform, knowing himself to be so. For let the words and actions otherwise signify what they will, yet that people have in effect agreed among themselves, that persons who use them, need not intend them so, and that others need not understand them so. And hence they cease to be of the nature of any pretension to grace. And surely it is an absurdity to say, that men openly and solemnly profess grace, and yet do not so much as pretend to it. If a certain people should agree, and it should be an established principle among them, that men might and ought to use such and such words to ther neighbors, which according to their proper signification were a profession of entire love and devoted friendship towards the man they speak to, and yet not think that he has any love in his heart to him, yea, and know at the same time that he had a reigning enmity against him; and it was known that this was

the established principle of the people ; would not these words, whatever their proper signification was, entirely cease to be any profession or testimony of friendship to his neighbor ? To be sure, there could be no visibility of it to the eye of reason.

Thus it is evident, that those who are admitted into the church on the principles that I oppose, are not professing saints, nor visible saints ; because that thing which alone is truly saintship, is not what they profess, or make any pretence to, or have any visibility of, to the eye of a Christian judgment. Or if they in fact be visible and professing saints, yet, they are not admitted as such ; no profession of true saintship, nor any manner of visibility of it, has any thing to do in the affair.

There is one way to evade these things, which has been taken by some. They plead, although it be true, that the scripture represents the members of the visible church of Christ as professors of godliness ; and they are abundantly called by the name of saints in scripture, undoubtedly because they were saints by profession, and in visibility, and the acceptance of others ; yet this is not with any reference to saving holiness, but to quite another sort of saintship, viz. moral sincerity ; and that this is the real saintship, discipleship, and godliness, which is professed, and visible in them, and with regard to which, as having an appearance of it to the eye of reason, they have the name of saints, disciples, &c. in scripture.

It must be noted, that in this objection the visibility is supposed to be of real saintship, discipleship, and godliness, but only another sort of real godliness, than that which belongs to those who shall finally be owned by Christ as his people, at the day of judgment.

To which I answer, This is a mere evasion ; the only one, that ever I saw or heard of; and I think the only one possible. For it is certain, they are not professors of sanctifying grace, or true saintship : The principle proceeded on, being, that they need make no pretence to that ; nor has any visibility of saving holiness any thing to do in the affair. If then they have any holiness at all, it must be of another sort. And if

this evasion fails, all fails, and the whole matter in debate must be given up. Therefore I desire that this matter may be impartially considered and examined to the very bottom; and that it may be thoroughly inquired, whether this distinction of these two sorts of real Christianity, godliness, and holiness, is a distinction, that Christ in his word is the author of; or whether it be an human invention of something which the New Testament knows nothing of, devised to serve and maintain an hypothesis. And here I desire that the following things may be observed.

1. According to this hypothesis, the words saints, disciples, and Christians, are used four ways in the New Testament, as applied to four sorts of persons. (1.) To those that in truth and reality are the heirs of eternal life, and that shall judge the world, or have indeed that saintship which is saving. (2.) To those who profess this, and pretend to and make a fair shew of a supreme regard to Christ, and to renounce the world for his sake, but have not real ground for these pretences and appearances. (3.) To those who, although they have not saving grace, yet have that other sort of real godliness or saintship, viz. moral sincerity in religion; and so are properly a sort of real saints, true Christians, sincerely godly persons, and disciples indeed, though they have no saving grace. And (4.) to those who make a profession and have a visibility of this latter sort of sincere Christianity, and are nominally such kind of saints, but are not so indeed. So that here are two sorts of real Christians, and two sorts of visible Christians; two sorts of invisible and real churches of Christ, and two sorts of visible churches. Now will any one that is well acquainted with the New Testament say, there is in that the least appearance or shadow of such a fourfold use of the words, saints, disciples, &c.? It is manifest by what was observed before, that these words are there used but two ways; and that those of mankind to whom these names are applied, are there distinguished into but two sorts, viz. Those who have really a saving interest in Christ, spiritual conformity and union to him, and those who have a name for it, as having a profession and appearance of it. And this is further evi-

dent by various representations, which we there find of the visible church; as in the company of virgins that went forth to meet the bridegroom, we find a distinction of them into but two sorts, viz. The wise that had both lamps and oil; and those who had lamps indeed like the wise virgins (therein having an external shew of the same thing, viz. oil) but really had no oil; signifying that they had the same profession and outward shew of the same sort of religion, and entertained the same hopes with the wise virgins. So when the visible church is represented by the husbandman's floor, we find a distinction but of two sorts, viz. the wheat and the chaff. So again, when the church is compared to the husbandman's field, we find a distinction but of two sorts, the wheat and the tares, (which naturalists observe) show or appear exactly like the wheat, until it comes to bring forth its fruit; representing, that those who are only visible Christians, have a visibility or appearance of the nature of that wheat, which shall be gathered into Christ's barn; and that nature is saving grace.

2. It is evident, that those who had the name of disciples in the times of the New Testament, bore that name with reference to a visibility and pretence of the same relation to Christ, which they had who should be finally owned as his. This is manifest by John viii. 30, 31. "As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." (Compare Luke xiv. 25, 26, 27, and John xv. 8.) The phrase, disciples indeed, is relative; and has reference to a visibility, pretence, or name, only, which it is set in opposition to, and has a reference to that name and visibility that those, who then bore the name of disciples, had; which makes it evident, that those who then bore the name of disciples, had a visibility and pretence of the same discipleship Christ speaks of, which he calls true discipleship, or discipleship indeed; for true discipleship is not properly set in opposition to any thing else but a pretence to the same thing, that is not true. The phrase, gold indeed, is in reference and opposition to something that has the appearance of that same metal, and not to an appearance of brass.

If there were another sort of real discipleship in those days, besides saving discipleship, persons might be Christ's disciples indeed, or truly (as the word in the original is) without continuing in his word, and without selling all that they had, and without hating father and mother and their own lives, for his sake. By this it appears, that those who bore the name of disciples in those times were distinguished into but two sorts, disciples in name or visibility, and disciples indeed; and that the visibility and profession of the former was of the discipleship of the latter.

3. The same thing is evident by 1 John ii. 19. "They went out from us, because they were not of us: If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." The words naturally suggest and imply, that those professing Christians, who at last proved false, did, before they went out, seem to belong to the society of the true saints, or those endued with persevering grace and holiness; they seemed to be of their number, i. e. They were so in pretence and visibility, and so were accepted in the judgment of charity.

4. The name and visibility, that nominal or visible Christians had in the days of the New Testament, was of saving Christianity, and not of moral sincerity; for they had a name to live, though many of them were dead, Rev. iii. 1. Now it is very plain what that is in religion which is called by the name of life, all over the New Testament, viz. saving grace; and I do not know that any thing else, of a religious nature, is ever so called.

5. The visibility, that visible Christians had of saintship in the apostles' days, was not of moral sincerity, but gracious sincerity, or saving saintship. For they are spoken of as being visibly of the number of those saints who shall judge the world, and judge angels. 1 Cor. vi. 1, 2, 3. "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know, that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged BY YOU, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that WE shall judge angels?" These things do manifestly imply, that if the Christian Corinthians

were what they supposed they were, and what they professed to be, and what they were accepted to be, they were some of those saints who at the day of judgment should judge angels and men.

6. That the visibility was not only of moral sincerity, but saving grace, is manifest, because the apostle speaks of visible Christians as visible "members of Christ's body, of his flesh, and of his bones, and one spirit with him, and temples of the Holy Ghost," Eph. v. 30, and 1 Cor. vi. 16, 19. And the Apostle Peter speaks of visible Christians as those who were visibly such righteous persons as should be saved; and that are distinguished from the ungodly, and them that obey not the gospel, who shall perish. 1 Pet. iv. 16, 17, 18. "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at US," (us Christians, comprehending himself, and those to whom he wrote, and all of that sort) "what shall the end of them be that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?"

7. That the visibility was not merely of moral sincerity, but of that sort of saintship which the saints in heaven have, is manifest by this, that they are often spoken of as visibly belonging to heaven, and as of the society of the saints in heaven. So the apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians speaks of them as visibly of the same household or family of God, a part of which is in heaven. Chap. ii. 19. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Together with the next chapter, Ver. 15. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Where the context and continuation of discourse demonstrate, that he is still speaking of the same family or household he had spoken of in the latter part of the preceding chapter. So all visible Christians are spoken of as visibly the children of the church which is in heaven. Gal. iv. 26. "Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all." The same apostle speaks of visible Christ-

ians as being visibly come to the heavenly city, and having joined the glorious company of angels there, and as visibly belonging to the "general assembly and church of the firstborn, that are written in heaven, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," Heb. xii. 22, 23. And elsewhere they are spoken of as being visibly of the number of those who have their "names written in the book of life," Rev. iii. 5, and xxii. 19. They who truly have their names written in the book of life, are God's true saints, that have saving grace; as is evident by Rev. xiii. 8. "And all that dwell on the earth, shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world." And chap. xx. 12. "And another book was opened, which was the book of life." Ver. 15. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." We are told, in the conclusion of this chapter, how they were disposed of whose names were not written in the book of life; and then the prophet proceeds, in the next chapter, to tell us, how they were disposed of whose names were found there written, viz. that they were admitted into the New Jerusalem. Ver. 27. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." And yet in the next chapter it is implied, that some who were not truly gracious persons, and some that should finally perish, were visibly of the number of those that had both a part in the New Jerusalem, and also their names written in the book of life. Ver. 19. "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city."

8. That baptism, by which the primitive converts were admitted into the church, was used as an exhibition and token of their being visibly "regenerated, dead to sin, alive to God, having the old man crucified, being delivered from the reigning power of sin, being made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness, those servants of God that have their fruit unto that holiness whose end is everlasting life;" as it is evident by Rom. vi. throughout. In the former part of the chapter, he speaks of the Christian Romans, as "dead

to sin, being buried with Christ in baptism, having their old man crucified with Christ," &c. He does not mean only, that their baptism laid them under special obligations to these things, and was a mark and token of their engagement to be thus hereafter; but was designed as a mark, token, and exhibition, of their being visibly thus already. As is most manifest by the apostle's prosecution of his argument in the following part of the chapter. Ver. 14. "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Ver. 17, 18. "God be thanked, ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Ver. 22. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

9. It is evident, that it is not only a visibility of moral sincerity in religion, which is the scripture qualification of admission into the Christian church, but a visibility of regeneration and renovation of heart, because it was foretold that God's people and the ministers of his house in the days of the Messiah, should not admit into the Christian church any that were not visibly circumcised in heart. Ezek. xliv. 6....9. "And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God, O ye house of Israel, Let it suffice you of all your abominations, in that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat, and the blood; and they have broken my covenant, because of all your abominations: And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things, but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves. Thus saith the Lord, no stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel."

The venerable author of the *Appeal to the Learned*, says, page 10, "That this scripture has no particular reference to

the Lord's supper." I answer, though I do not suppose it has merely a reference to that ordinance, yet I think it manifest, that it has a reference to admitting persons into the Christian church, and to external church privileges. It might be easy to prove, that these nine last chapters of Ezekiel must be a vision and prophecy of the state of things in the church of God in the Messiah's days: But I suppose it will not be denied, it being a thing wherein divines are so generally agreed. And I suppose, none will dispute but that by the house of God and his sanctuary, which it is here foretold the uncircumcised in heart should not be admitted into in the days of the gospel, is meant the same house, sanctuary, or temple of God, that the prophet had just before been speaking of, in the foregoing part of the same chapter, and been describing throughout the four preceding chapters. But we all know, that the New Testament house of God is his church. Heb. iii. 3. "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who builded the house, hath more honor than the house." Ver. 6. "But Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we," &c. 2 Tim. ii. 20. In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth," &c. 1 Tim. iii. 15. "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." Eph. ii. 20, 21. "And are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." 1 Cor. iii. 9. "Ye are God's building." Ver. 16. Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God?" 1 Pet. ii. 5. "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." Chap. iv. 17. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: And if it begin at us, what shall the end be?" &c. Heb. x. 21. "And having an high priest over the house of God." Ezekiel's temple is doubtless the same that it is foretold the Messiah should build. Zech. vi. 12, 13. "The man whose name is the branch....he shall build the temple of the Lord, even he shall build the temple of the Lord." And what the temple that Christ

builds is, the apostle tells us, Heb. iii. 3, 6. The temple that Ezekiel in his vision was bid to observe the measures of, as it was measured with a reed, (Ezek. xl. 3, 4) we have reason to think, was the same the Apostle John in his vision was bid to measure with a reed, Rev. xi. 1. And when it is here foretold, that the uncircumcised in heart should not enter into the Christian sanctuary or church, nor have communion in the offerings of God's bread, of the fat and blood, that were made there, I think so much is at least implied, that they should not have communion in those ordinances of the Christian sanctuary, in which that body and blood of Christ were symbolically represented, which used of old to be symbolically represented by the fat and the blood. For the admission into the Christian church here spoken of, is an admission into the visible, and not the mystical church; for such an admission is spoken of as is made by the officers of the church. And I suppose it will not be doubted, but that by circumcision of heart is meant the spiritual renewing of the heart; not any common virtues, which do not in the least change the nature, and mortify the corruption of the heart; as is held by all orthodox divines, and as Mr. Stoddard in particular abundantly insisted. However, if any body disputes it, I desire that the scripture may be allowed to speak for itself; for it very often speaks of circumcision of heart; and this every where, both in the Old Testament and New, manifestly signifies that great change of heart that was typified by the ceremony of circumcision of the flesh: The same which afterwards was signified by baptism, viz. regeneration, or else the progress of that work in sanctification; as we read of the washing of regeneration, &c. The apostle tells us what was signified both by circumcision and baptism, Col. ii. 11, 12. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism; wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God." Where I would observe by the way, he speaks of all the members of the church of Colosse as visibly circumcised with this circumcision; agreeable to Ezekiel's prophecy, that the mem-

bers of the Christian church shall visibly have this circumcision. The apostle speaks in like manner, of the members of the church of Philippi as spiritually circumcised (i. e. in profession and visibility) and tells wherein this circumcision appeared. Philip. iii. 3. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." And in Rom. ii. 28, 29, the apostle speaks of this Christian circumcision and Jewish circumcision together, calling the former the circumcision of the heart. "But he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the FLESH; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of *the heart*, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." And whereas in this prophecy of Ezekiel it is foretold, that none should enter into the Christian sanctuary or church, but such as are circumcised in heart and circumcised in flesh; thereby I suppose is intended, that none should be admitted but such as were visibly regenerated, and also baptised with outward baptism.

By the things which have been observed, I think it abundantly evident, that the saintship, godliness, and holiness, of which, according to scripture, professing Christians and visible saints do make a profession and have a visibility, is not any religion and virtue that is the result of common grace, or moral sincerity (as it is called) but saving grace. Yet there are many other clear evidences of the same thing, which may in some measure appear in all the following part of this discourse. Wherefore,

II. I come now to another reason, why I answer the question at first proposed, in the negative, viz. That it is a duty which in an ordinary state of things is required of all that are capable of it, to make an explicit open profession of the true religion, by owning God's covenant; or, in other words, professedly and verbally to unite themselves to God in his covenant, by their own public act.

Here I would (first) prove this point; and then (secondly) draw the consequence, and shew how this demonstrates the thing in debate.

*First*....I shall endeavor to establish this point, viz. That it is the duty of God's people thus publicly to own the covenant; and that it was not only a duty in Israel of old, but is so in the Christian church, and to the end of the world; and that it is a duty required of adult persons before they come to sacraments. And this being a point of great consequence in this controversy, but a matter seldom handled (though it seems to be generally taken for granted) I shall be the more particular in the consideration of it.

This not only seems to be in itself most consonant to reason, and is a duty generally allowed in New England, but is evidently a great institution of the word of God, appointed as a very important part of that public religion by which God's people should give honor to his name. This institution we have in Deut. vi. 13. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name." It is repeated, chap. x. 20. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name." In both places it might have been rendered; thou shalt swear in his name, or into his name. In the original, *bishmo*, the prefix is *beth*, which signifies in or into, as well as by. And whereas, in the latter place, in our translation, it is said, to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name, the words are thus in the Hebrew, *ubho thidhbak ubhishmo tisshabheang*. The literal translation of which is, into him shalt thou cleave [or unite] and into his name shalt thou swear. There is the same prefix, *beth*, before him, when it is said, thou shalt cleave to him, as before his name, when it is said, thou shalt swear by his name. Swearing into God's name, is a very emphatical and significant way of expressing a person's taking on himself, by his own solemn profession, the name of God, as one of his people; or by swearing to or covenanting with God, uniting himself by his own act to the people that is called by his name. The figure of speech is something like that by which Christians in the New Testament are said to be baptized εις το ονομα, into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. So Christians are said to be baptized into Christ, Gal. iii. 17. This swearing by the

name, or into the name of the Lord, is so often, and in such a manner spoken of by the prophets as a great duty of God's solemn public worship, as much as praying or sacrificing, that it would be unreasonable to understand it only, or chiefly, of occasionally taking an oath before a court of judicature, which, it may be, one tenth part of the people never had occasion to do once in their lives. If we well consider the matter, we shall see abundant reason to be satisfied, that the thing intended in this institution was publicly covenanting with God. Covenanting in scripture is very often called by the name of swearing, and a covenant is called an oath.* And particularly God's covenant is called his oath. Deut. xxix. 12. "That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath." Ver. 14. "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath." 1 Chron. xvi. 15, 16. "Be ye mindful always of his covenant: Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac." 2 Chron. xv. 12. "And they entered into covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers." Ver. 14, 15. "And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice: And all Judah rejoiced at the oath." Swearing to the Lord, or swearing in, or into the name of the Lord, are equipollent expressions in the Bible. The prefixes *beth* and *lamed* are evidently used indifferently in this case to signify the same thing. Zeph. i. 5. "That swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham." The word translated *to the Lord*, is *Laihovah*, with the prefix *lamed*; but *to Malcham* is *Bemalcham* with the prefix *beth into Malcham*. In 1 Kings xviii. 32, it is said, "Elijah built an altar in the name of the Lord;" *beshem*. Here the prefix *beth* is manifestly of the same force with *lamed*, in 1 Kings viii. 44. "The house I have built for thy name or to thy name;" *leshem*.

God's people in swearing to his name, or into his name, according to the institution, solemnly professed two things, viz. their faith and obedience. The former part of this profession of religion was called, Saying, the Lord liveth. Jer. v.

* As Gen. xxi. 23, to the end, xxvi. 28, to the end, xxxi. 44. 53. Josh. ii. 12, &c. 1 Sam. xx. 16, 17, 42. 2 Kings xi. 4. Eccl. viii. 2. Ezek. xvi. 59, xvii. 16, and many other places.

2. "And though they say, the Lord liveth, yet surely they swear falsely." Ver. 7. "They have sworn by them that are no gods:" That is, they had openly professed idol worship. Chap. iv. 2. "Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory." (Compare this with Isa. xlv. 23, 24, 25.) Jer. xliv. 26. "Behold I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, the Lord liveth:" i. e. They shall never any more make any profession of the true God, and of the true religion, but shall be wholly given up to Heathenism. See also Jer. xii. 16, and xvi. 14, 15, and xxiii. 7, 8. Hos. iv. 15. Amos viii. 14, and ver. 5.

These words CHAI JEHOVAH, Jehovah liveth, summarily comprehended a profession of faith in that allsufficiency and immutability of God, which is implied in the name JEHOVAH, and which attributes are very often signified in scripture by God's being the LIVING GOD, as is very manifest from Josh. iii. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36. 2 Kings xix. 4, 16. Dan. vi. 26. Psal. xviii. 46, and innumerable other places.

The other thing professed in swearing into the Lord was obedience, called, Walking in the name of the Lord. Micah iv. 5. "All people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." Still with the prefix *beth*, *beshem*, as they were said to swear *beshem*, in the name, or into the name of the Lord.

This institution, in Deuteronomy, of swearing into the name of the Lord, or visibly and explicitly uniting themselves to him in covenant, was not prescribed as an extraordinary duty, or a duty to be performed on a return from a general apostacy, and some other extraordinary occasions: But is evidently mentioned in the institution, as a part of the public worship of God to be performed by all God's people, properly belonging to the visible worshippers of Jehovah; and so it is very often mentioned by the prophets, as I observed before,

and could largely demonstrate, if there was occasion for it, and would not too much lengthen out this discourse.

And this was not only an institution belonging to Israel under the Old Testament, but also to Gentile converts, and Christians under the New Testament. Thus God declares concerning the Gentile nations, Jer. xii. 16. "If they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, the Lord liveth, as they taught my people to swear by Baal: Then shall they be built in the midst of my people," i. e. They shall be added to my church; or as the Apostle Paul expresses it, Eph. iii. 19....22. "They shall be no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and be built upon the foundation of Christ; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, &c. In whom they also shall be builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit." So it is foretold, that the way of public covenanting should be the way of the Gentiles joining themselves to the church in the days of the gospel, Isa. xliv. 3, 4, 5. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses; one shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord." As subscribing an instrument whereby they bound themselves to the Lord. This was subscribing and covenanting themselves into the name of Israel, and swearing into the name of the Lord, in the language of those forementioned texts in Deuteronomy. So taking hold of God's covenant, is foretold as the way in which the sons of the stranger in the days of the gospel should be joined to God's church, and brought into God's sanctuary, and to have communion in its worship and ordinances, in Isa. lvi. 3, 6, 7. So in Isa. xix. 18, the future conversion of the Gentiles in the days of the gospel, and their being brought to profess the true religion, is expressed by that, that they should swear to the Lord of Hosts. "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to

the Lord of Hosts." So in Jer. xxiii. 5....8, it seems to be plainly foretold, that after Christ is come, and has wrought out his great redemption, the same way of publicly professing faith in the allsufficient and immutable God, by swearing, the Lord liveth, should be continued, which was instituted of old; but only with this difference, that whereas formerly they covenanted with God as their Redeemer out of Egypt, now they shall as it were forget that work, and have a special respect to a much greater redemption. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch. Therefore they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country," &c. Another remarkable place wherein it is plainly foretold, that the like method of professing religion should be continued in the days of the gospel, which was instituted in Israel, by swearing or public covenanting, is that, Isa. xlv. 22....25. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else: I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear: Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: Even to him shall men come: In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." This prophecy will have its last fulfilment at the day of judgment; but it is plain, that the thing most directly intended is the conversion of the Gentile world to the Christian religion. What is here called swearing, the apostle, in citing this place, once and again calls confessing; Rom. xiv. 11...." Every tongue shall confess to God." Philip. ii. 10...." That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Which is the word commonly used in the New Testament, to signify making a public profession of religion. So Rom. x. 9, 10. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto

salvation," Where a public profession of religion with the mouth is evidently spoken of as a great duty of all Christ's people, as well as believing in him ; and ordinarily requisite to salvation ; not that it is necessary in the same manner that faith is, but in like manner as baptism is. Faith and verbal profession are jointly spoken of here as necessary to salvation, in the same manner as faith and baptism are, in Mark xvi. 16. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." And I know no good reason why we should not look on oral profession and covenanting with Christ, in those who are capable of it, as much of a stated duty in the Christian church, and an institution universally pertaining to the followers of Christ, as much as baptism.

And if it be so that explicit open covenanting with God be a great duty required of all, as has been represented ; then it ought to be expected of persons before they are admitted to the privileges of the adult in the church of Christ. Surely it is proper, if this explicit covenanting take place at all, that it should take place before persons come to those ordinances wherein they, by their own act, publicly confirm and seal this covenant. This public transaction of covenanting, which God has appointed, ought to be, or have an existence, before we publicly confirm and seal this transaction. It was that by which the Israelites of old were introduced into the communion of God's nominal or visible church and holy city : As appears by Isa. xlviii. 1, 2. "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness : For they call themselves of the holy city," &c. When and after what manner particularly the Israelites ordinarily performed this explicit covenanting, I do not know that we can be certain ; but as it was first done on occasion of God's first promulgating his law or covenant at mount Sinai, and was done again on occasion of a repetition or renewed promulgation of it on the plains of Moab, and was done on occasion of the public reading of the law in Josiah's time (2 Kings xxiii. 3.) and was done after the return from

the captivity, on occasion of the public reading of it at the feast of tabernacles (Neh. viii. ix. and x.) so it appears to me most likely, that it was done every seventh year, when the law or covenant of God was, by divine appointment, read in the audience of all the people at the feast of tabernacles; at least done then by all who then heard the law read the first time, and who never had heard, nor publicly owned the covenant of God before. There are good evidences that they never had communion in those ordinances which God had appointed as seals of his covenant, wherein they themselves were to be active, such as their sacrifices, &c. until they had done it: It is plainly implied in Psal. l. that it was the manner in Israel vocally to own God's covenant, or to take it into their mouths, before they sealed that covenant in their sacrifices. See Ver. 16, taken with the preceding part of the Psalm, from Ver. 5. And that they did it before they partook of the passover (which indeed was one of their sacrifices) or entered into the sanctuary for communion in the temple worship, is confirmed by the words of Hezekiah, when he proclaimed a passover, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. "Now be ye not stiff necked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves unto the Lord (in the Hebrew, give the hand to the Lord) and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever, and serve the Lord your God." To give the hand, seems to be a Hebrew phrase for entering into covenant, or obliging themselves by covenant, Ezra x. 19. "And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives." And, as has been already observed, it was foretold that Christians should in this way be admitted to communion in the privileges of the church of Christ.

Having thus established the premises of the argument I intend, I now come,

*Secondly*, To that which I think must be the consequence, viz. That none ought to be admitted to the privileges of adult persons in the church of Christ, but such as make a profession of real piety. For the covenant, to be owned or professed, is God's covenant, which he has revealed as the method of our spiritual union with him, and our acceptance as the ob-

jects of his eternal favor; which is no other than the covenant of grace; at least it is so, without dispute, in these days of the gospel. To own this covenant, is to profess the consent of our hearts to it; and that is the sum and substance of true piety. It is not only a professing the assent of our understandings, that we understand there is such a covenant, or that we understand we are obliged to comply with it; but it is to profess the consent of our wills, it is to manifest that we do comply with it. There is mutual profession in this affair, a profession on Christ's part, and a profession on our part; as it is in marriage. And it is the same sort of profession that is made on both sides, in this respect, that each professes a consent of heart. Christ in his word declares an entire consent of heart as to what he offers; and the visible Christian, in the answer that he makes to it in his Christian profession, declares a consent and compliance of heart to his proposal. Owning the covenant is professing to make the transaction of that covenant our own. The transaction of that covenant is that of espousals to Christ; on our part, it is giving our souls to Christ as his spouse. There is no one thing that the covenant of grace is so often compared to in scripture, as the marriage covenant; and the visible transaction, or mutual profession there is between Christ and the visible church, is abundantly compared to the mutual profession there is in marriage. In marriage the bride professes to yield to the bridegroom's suit, and to take him for her husband, renouncing all others, and to give up herself to him to be entirely and forever possessed by him as his wife. But he that professes this towards Christ, professes saving faith. They that openly covenanted with God according to the tenor of the institution, Deut. x. 20, visibly united themselves to God in the union of that covenant; they professed on their parts the union of the covenant of God, which was the covenant of grace. It is said in the institution, "Thou shalt cleave to the Lord, and swear by his name;" or as the words more literally are, "Thou shalt unite unto the Lord, and swear into his name." So in Isa. lvi. it is called a "joining themselves to the Lord." But the union, cleaving, or joining of that covenant is saving

faith, the grand condition of the covenant of Christ, by which we are in Christ: This is what brings us into the Lord. For a person explicitly or professedly to enter into the union or relation of the covenant of grace with Christ, is the same as professedly to do that which on our part is the uniting act, and that is the act of faith. To profess the covenant of grace, is to profess the covenant, not as a spectator, but as one immediately concerned in the affair, as a party in the covenant professed; and this is to profess that in the covenant which belongs to us as a party, or to profess our part in the covenant; and that is the soul's believing acceptance of the Saviour. Christ's part is salvation, our part is a saving faith in him; not a feigned, but unfeigned faith; not a common, but special and saving faith; no other faith than this is the condition of the covenant of grace.

I know the distinction that is made by some, between the internal and external covenant; but, I hope, the divines that make this distinction, would not be understood, that there are really and properly two covenants of grace; but only that those who profess the one only covenant of grace, are of two sorts; there are those who comply with it internally and really, and others who do so only externally, that is, in profession and visibility. But he that externally and visibly complies with the covenant of grace, appears and professes to do so really. This distinction takes place also concerning the covenant of grace; the one only covenant of grace is exhibited two ways, the one externally by the preaching of the word, the other internally and spiritually by enlightening the mind rightly to understand the word. But it is with the covenant, as it is with the call of the gospel: He that really complies with the external call, has the internal call; so he that truly complies with the external proposal of God's covenant, as visible Christians profess to do, does indeed perform the inward condition of it. But the New Testament affords no more foundation for supposing two real and properly distinct covenants of grace, than it does to suppose two sorts of real Christians; the unscripturalness of which latter hypothesis I observed before.

When those persons who were baptized in infancy do properly own their baptismal covenant, the meaning of it is, that they now, being become capable to act for themselves, do professedly and explicitly make their parents' act, in giving them up to God, their own, by expressly giving themselves up to God. But this no person can do, without either being deceived, or dissembling and professing what he himself supposes to be a falsehood, unless he supposes that he in his heart consents to be God's. A child of Christian parents never does that for himself which his parents did for him in infancy, until he gives himself wholly to God. But surely *he* does not do it, who not only keeps back a part, but the chief part, his heart and soul. He that keeps back his heart, does in effect keep back all; and therefore, if he be sensible of it, is guilty of solemn wilful mockery, if he at the same time solemnly and publicly professes that he gives himself up to God. If there are any words used by such, which in their proper signification imply that they give themselves up to God; and if these words, as they intend them to be understood, and as they are understood by those that hear them, according to their established use and custom among that people, do not imply, that they do it really, but do truly reserve or keep back the chief part; it ceases to be a profession of giving themselves up to God, and so ceases to be a professed covenanting with God, or owning God's covenant; for the thing which they profess, belongs to no covenant of God, in being; for God has revealed no such covenant, nor has any such covenant of God any existence, in which our transacting of the covenant is a giving up ourselves to him with reserve, or holding back a part, especially holding back our souls, our chief part, and in effect our all. There is no covenant of God at all, that has these for its terms; to be sure, this is not the covenant of grace. And therefore although such public and solemn professing may be a very unwarrantable and great abuse of words, and taking God's name in vain, it is no professed covenanting with God.

One thing, as has been observed, that belonged to Israel's swearing into the name of the Lord, was *the Lord liveth*;

whereby they professed their faith in God's allsufficiency, immutability and faithfulness. But if they really had such a faith, it was a saving grace. They who indeed trust in the allsufficiency of God, he will surely be their allsufficient portion; and they who trust in God's immutability and faithfulness, he surely will never leave nor forsake them. There were two ways of swearing *Jehovah liveth*, that we read of in scripture; one we read of, Jer. ii. 2. "Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness:" And the other way is swearing falsely, which we read of in the next chapter, ver. 2, 3. "And though they say, The Lord liveth, yet surely they swear falsely." (And certainly none ought to do this. It follows, "O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?" i. e. God desires sincerity of heart in those that profess religion. Here a gracious sincerity is opposed to a false profession; for when it is said, "O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?" the expression is parallel with those, Psal. li. 6. "Behold thou desirest the truth in the inward parts." 1 Sam. xvi. 7. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Psal xi. 7. "His countenance doth behold the upright." But these texts speak of a gracious sincerity. Those spoken of, Jer. iv. 2. that "sware, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and righteousness," were gracious persons, who had a thorough conversion to God, as appears by the preceding verse, "If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me;" *i. e.* Do not do as you or Judah was charged with doing in the foregoing chapter, ver. 10. "Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly." Do not do thus, "but if thou wilt return, return unto me." And then it is added in the second verse, "And thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in truth," &c. that is, then your profession of religion will be worth regarding, you will be indeed what you pretend to be, you will be Israelites indeed, in whose profession is no guile. They who said "The Lord liveth in truth, in judgment and in righteousness;" they said, the Lord liveth as David did, Psal. xviii. 46. "The Lord liveth and blessed be my Rock." And did as the apostle says he did, 1 Tim. iv. 10. "We trust in the

LIVING GOD, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." And as he would have Timothy exhort rich men to do, chap. vi. 17. "That they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the Living God." When the apostle speaks of a profession of our faith in Christ, as one duty which all Christians ought to perform as they seek salvation, it is the profession of a saving faith that he speaks of: His words plainly imply it; "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The faith which was to be professed with the mouth, was the same which the apostle speaks of as in the heart, but that is saving faith. The latter is yet plainer in the following words; "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Believing unto righteousness is saving faith; but it is evidently the same faith which is spoken of, as professed with the mouth, in the next words in the same sentence. And that the Gentiles, in professing the Christian religion, or swearing to Christ, should profess saving faith, is implied, Isa. xlv. 23, 24. "Every tongue shall swear; surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;" i. e. should profess entirely to depend on Christ's righteousness and strength.

For persons merely to promise, that they *will* believe in Christ, or that they *will hereafter* comply with the conditions and duties of the covenant of grace, is not to own that covenant. Such persons do not profess *now* to enter into the covenant of grace with Christ, or into the relation of that covenant to Christ. All that they do at present, is only a speaking fair; they say they will do it hereafter; they profess that they will hereafter obey that command of God, to believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. But what is such a profession good for, and what credit is to be given to such promises of future obedience; when at the same time they pretend no other at present, than to live and continue in rebellion against those great commands which give no allowance or license for delay? They who do thus, instead of properly owning the covenant, do rather for the present visibly reject it. It

is not unusual, in some churches, where the doctrine I oppose has been established, for persons at the same time that they come into the church, and pretend to own the covenant, freely to declare to their neighbors, they have no imagination that they have any true faith in Christ, or love to him. Such persons, instead of being professedly united to Christ, in the union of the covenant of grace, are rather visibly destitute of the love of Christ, and so, instead of being qualified for admission to the Lord's supper, are rather exposed to that denunciation of the apostle, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha."

That outward covenanting, which is agreeable to scripture institution, is not only a promising what is future (though that is not excluded) but a professing what is present, as it is in the marriage covenant. (Though indeed it is true, that it was chiefly on account of the promise or vow which there is in the covenant, that it is called swearing.) For a woman to promise, that she will hereafter renounce all other men for the sake of him who makes suit to her, and will in some future time accept of him for her husband, is not for her now to enter into the marriage covenant with him: She that does this with a man, professes now to accept of him, renouncing all others; though promises of hereafter behaving towards him as a wife, are also included in the transaction. It seems as though the primitive converts to Christianity, in the profession they made of religion, in order to their admission into the Christian church, and in their visibly entering into covenant, in order to the initiating seal of the covenant in baptism, did not explicitly make any promises of any thing future, they only professed the present sentiments and habit of their minds, they professed that they believed in Christ, and so were admitted into the church by baptism; and yet undoubtedly they were, according to forementioned prophecies, admitted in the way of public covenanting, and as the covenant people of God they owned the covenant before the seal of the covenant was applied. Their professing faith in Christ was visibly owning the covenant of grace, because faith in Christ was the grand condition of that covenant. Indeed, if the faith which they

professed in order to baptism, was only an historical or doctrinal faith, (as some suppose) or any common faith, it would not have been any visible entering into the covenant of grace; for a common faith is not the condition of that covenant; nor would there properly have been any covenanting in the case. If we suppose, the faith they professed was the grace by which the soul is united to Christ, their profession was a covenanting in this respect also, that it implied an engagement of future obedience; for true faith in Christ includes in its nature an acceptance of him as our Lord and King, and devoting ourselves to his service: But a profession of historical faith implies no profession of accepting Christ as our King, nor engagement to submit to him as such.

When the Israelites publicly covenanted with God, according to the institution in Deuteronomy, they did not only promise something future, but professed something present; they avouched Jehovah to be their God, and also promised to keep his commands. Thus it was in that solemn covenant transaction between God and the people on the plains of Moab, which is summarily described, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments." The people, in avouching God for their God, professed a compliance with the terms of the covenant of grace; as the covenant of grace is summarily expressed in those words, "I will be thy God, and thou shalt be my people." They that avouch the Lord to be their God, do profess to accept of Jehovah as their God; and that is to accept him as the object of their supreme respect and trust. For that which we choose as the object of our highest regard, that, and that only, do we take as our God. None therefore that value and love the world more than Jehovah, can, without lying, or being deceived, avouch Jehovah to be their God: And none that do not trust in Christ, but trust more in their own strength or righteousness, can avouch Christ to be their Sa-

viour. To avouch God to be our God, is to profess that he is our God by our own act ; i. e. That we choose him to be our chief good and last end, the supreme object of our esteem and regard, that we devote ourselves to, and depend upon. And if we are sensible that we do not this sincerely, we cannot profess that we actually do it ; for he that does not do it sincerely, does not do it at all : There is no room for the distinction of a moral sincerity and gracious sincerity in this case : A supreme respect of heart to God, or a supreme love to him, which is real, is but of one sort : It would be absurd, to talk of a morally sincere supreme love to God in those who really love dirt and dung more than him. Whoever does with any reality at all make God the object of the supreme regard of his heart, is certainly a gracious person. And whoever does not make God the supreme object of his respect with a gracious sincerity, certainly does not do it with any sincerity. I fear, while leading people in many of our congregations, who have no thought of their having the least spark of true love to God in their hearts, to say, publicly and solemnly, that they avouch God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be their God, and that they give themselves up to him, we have led them to say they know not what. To be sure, they are very obscure expressions, if they mean any thing that a carnal man does, under the reigning power of sin and enmity against God.

Here possibly it may be objected, that it is unreasonable to suppose any such thing should be intended, in the profession of the congregation in the wilderness, as a gracious respect to God, that which is the condition of God's covenant, when we have reason to think that so few of them were truly gracious. But I suppose, upon mature consideration this will not appear at all unreasonable. It is no more unreasonable to suppose this people to make a profession of that respect to God, which they had not in their hearts now, than at other times when we are informed they did so, as in Ezek. xxxiii. 31. "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people :" [i. e. as though they were my saints, as they profess to be] "For with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness." So in the

apostle's time, that people professed that to be in their hearts towards God, which was not there. The apostle is speaking of them, when he says, Tit. i. 16. "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him." This was common among that people; God declares them to be an hypocritical nation, Isa. x. 6. And it is certain, this was the case with them in the wilderness; they there professed that respect to God which they had not; as is evident by Psal. lxxviii. 36, 37. "They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant." In owning the covenant with God, they professed their heart was right with him, as appears, because it is mentioned as an evidence of their having lied or dealt falsely in their profession, that their heart was not right with him, and so proved not stedfast in God's covenant, which they had owned. If their heart had been right with God, they would have been truly pious persons; which is a demonstration, that what they professed was true piety. It also appears that if they had had such an heart in them as they pretended to have, they would have been truly pious persons, from Deut. v. where we have a rehearsal of their covenanting at Mount Sinai. Concerning this it is said, Ver. 28, 29. "And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever." The people were mistaken about their disposition and preparation of heart to go through the business of God's service, as the man in the parable, that undertook to build a tower without counting the cost. Nor need it seem at all incredible, that that generation who covenanted at Mount Sinai, should, the greater part of them, be deceived, and think their hearts thoroughly disposed to give up themselves forever to God, if we consider how much they had strongly to move their affections; the wonders wrought in Egypt and at the Red Sea, where they were led through on dry ground, and the Egyptians were so miraculously de-

troyed; whereby their affections were greatly raised, and they sang God's praises: And particularly what they now saw at Mount Sinai, of the astonishing manifestations of God's majesty there. Probably the greater part of the sinners among them were deceived with false affections; and if there were others that were less affected and who were not deceived, it is not incredible that they, in those circumstances, should wilfully dissemble in their profession, and so in a more gross sense flatter God with their lips, and lie to him with their tongues. And these things are more credible concerning that generation, being a generation peculiarly left to hardness and blindness of mind in divine matters, and peculiarly noted in the Book of Psalms for hypocrisy. And as to the generation of their children that owned the covenant on the plains of Moab, they not only in like manner had very much to move their affections, the awful judgments of God they had seen on their fathers, God having brought them through the wilderness, and subdued Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan before them, Moses's affecting rehearsal of the whole series of God's wonderful dealings with them, together with his most pathetical exhortations; but it was also a time of great revival of religion and powerful influence of the Spirit of God, and that generation was probably the most excellent generation that ever was in Israel; to be sure, there is more good and less hurt spoken of them, than of any other generation that we have any account of in scripture.* A very great part of them swore in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness: And no wonder, that others at such a time fell in, either deceiving, or being deceived, with common affections; as is usual in times of great works of God for his church, and of the flourishing of religion. In succeeding generations, as the people grew more corrupt, I suppose, their covenanting or swearing into the name of the Lord degenerated into a matter of mere form and ceremony; even as subscribing religious articles seems to have done with the church of England;

* See Numb. xiv. 31. Deut. i. 39, and viii. 15, 16. Josh. xxii. 2, and verse 11, to the end, and xxiii. 8. Deut. iv. 4. Josh. xxiv. 31. Jude ii. 17, 22. Psal. lxviii. 14. Jer. ii. 2, 3, 21, and xxxi. 2, 3. Hos. ix. 10.

and as it is to be feared, owning the covenant, as it is called, has too much done in Newengland; it being visibly a prevailing custom for persons to neglect this, until they come to be married, and then to do it for their credit's sake, and that their children may be baptized. And I suppose, there was commonly a great laxness in Israel among the priests who had the conduct of this affair: And there were many things in the nature of that comparatively carnal dispensation, which negatively gave occasion for such things; that is, whereby it had by no means so great a tendency to prevent such like irregularities, though very wrong in themselves, as the more excellent dispensation, introduced by Christ and his Apostles. And though these things were testified against by the Prophets, before the Babylonish captivity; yet God who is only wise, did designedly in a great measure wink at these, and many other great irregularities in the church until the time of reformation should come, which the Messiah was to have the honor of introducing. But of these things I may perhaps have occasion to say something more, when I come to answer the objection concerning the passover.

Now to return to the argument from the nature of covenanting with God, or owning God's covenant: As to the promises, which are herein, either explicitly or implicitly, made; the making these promises implies a profession of true piety. For in the covenant of grace universal obedience is engaged, obedience to all the commands of God; and the performance of inward spiritual duties is as much engaged in the covenant of grace, as external duties; and in some respects much more. Therefore he that visibly makes the covenant of grace his own, promises to perform those internal duties, and to perform all duties with a gracious sincerity. We have no warrant, in our profession of God's covenant, to divide the duties of it, to take some, and leave out others: Especially have we not warrant to leave out those great commands, of believing with the heart, of loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. He that leaves out these, in effect leaves out all; for these are the sum of our whole duty, and of all

God's commands: If we leave these out of our profession, surely it is not the covenant of grace, which we profess. The Israelites when they covenanted with God at Mount Sinai, and said, when God had declared to them the ten commandments, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient;" their promise implied, that as they professed to know God, they would in works not deny, but own and honor him, and would conform to those two great commandments, which are the sum of all the ten, and concerning which God, said "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Deut. vi. 6. So, when they covenanted on the plains of Moab, they promised to keep and do God's commands, "with all their heart, and with all their soul," as is very evident by Deut. xxvi. 16, 17. So it was also when the people owned their covenant in Asa's time, 2 Chron. xv. 12. "They entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul." We have also another remarkable instance, 2 Kings xxiii. 3, and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31.

Now he who is wholly under the power of a carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, cannot promise these things without either great deceit, or the most manifest and palpable absurdity. Promising supposes the person to be conscious to himself, or persuaded of himself, that he has such an heart in him; for his lips pretend to declare his heart. The nature of a promise implies intention or design. And proper real intention implies will, disposition, and compliance of heart. But no natural man is properly willing to do these duties, nor does his heart comply with them; and to make natural men believe otherwise, tends greatly to their hurt. A natural man may be willing, from selflove, and from sinister views, to use means and take pains that he may obtain a willingness or disposition to these duties: But that is a very different thing from actually being willing, or truly having a disposition to them. So he may promise, that he will, from some considerations or other, take great pains to obtain such a heart: But if he does so, this is not the promise of the covenant of grace. Men may make

many religious promises to God, and many promises some way relating to the covenant of grace, that are not themselves the promises of that covenant; nor is there any thing of the nature of covenanting in the case, because although they should actually fulfil their promises, God is not obliged by promise to them. If a natural man promises to do all that it is possible for a natural man to do in religion, and fulfils his promises, God is not obliged, by any covenant that he has entered into with man, to perform any thing at all for him, respecting his saving benefits. And therefore he that promises these things only, enters into no covenant with God; because the very notion of entering into covenant with any being, is entering into a mutual agreement, doing or engaging that which, if done, the other party becomes engaged on his part. The New Testament informs us but of one covenant God enters into with mankind through Christ, and that is the covenant of grace; in which God obliges himself to nothing in it that is exclusive of unfeigned faith, and the spiritual duties that attend it: Therefore if a natural man makes ever so many vows, that he will perform all external duties, and will pray for help to do spiritual duties, and for an ability and will to comply with the covenant of grace, from such principles as he has, he does not lay hold of God's covenant, nor properly enter into any covenant with God: For we have no opportunity to covenant with God in any other covenant, than that which he has revealed; he becomes a covenant party in no other covenant. It is true, every natural man that lives under the gospel, is obliged to comply with the terms of the covenant of grace; and if he promises to do it, his promise may increase his obligation, though he flattered God with his mouth, and lied to him with his tongue, as the children of Israel did in promising. But it will not thence follow, that they ought knowingly to make a lying promise, or that ministers and churches should countenance them in so doing.

Indeed there is no natural man but what deceives himself, if he thinks he is truly willing to perform external obedience to God, universally and perseveringly through the various trials of life that he may expect. And therefore in promising

it, he is either very deceitful, or is like the foolish deceived man that undertook to build when he had not wherewith to finish. And if it be known by the church, before whom he promises to build and finish, that at the same time he does not pretend to have an heart to finish, his promise is worthy of no credit or regard from them, and can make nothing visible to them but his presumption.

A great confirmation of what has been said under this head of covenanting, is that text, Psal. l. 16. "But unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" This term, *the wicked*, in the more general use of it in scripture, is applied in that extent as to include all ungodly or graceless persons, all that are under the reigning power of sin, and are the objects of God's anger, or exposed to his eternal vengeance; as might easily be made to appear by a particular enumeration of texts all over the Bible. All such are in scripture called, "workers of iniquity, the children of the wicked one," Matth. xiii. 38. All such are said to be of the devil, 1 John iii. 8. And to be the children of the devil, verse 10. The righteous and the wicked are in a multitude of places in scripture put in opposition; and they are evidently opposed one to the other, and distinguished one from another in scripture, as saints and sinners, holy and unholy, those that fear God and those that fear him not, those that love him and those that hate him. All mankind are in scripture divided by these distinctions, and the Bible knows of no neuters or third sort. Indeed those who are really wicked, may be visibly righteous, righteous in profession and outward appearance: But a sort of men who have no saving grace, that yet are not really wicked men, are a sort of men of human invention, that the scripture is entirely ignorant of. It is reasonable to suppose, that by wicked men here, in this psalm, is meant all that hate instruction, and reject God's word (Psal. l. 17.) and not merely such wicked men as are guilty of those particular crimes mentioned, ver. 17.....20, stealing, adultery, fraud, and backbiting. Though only some particular ways of wickedness are mentioned, yet we are not to understand that all oth-

ers are excluded; yea the words, in the conclusion of the paragraph, are expressly applied to all that forget God in such a manner as to expose themselves to be torn in pieces by his wrath in hell, ver. 22. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." We can no more justly argue, that because some gross sins are here specified, that no sinners are meant but such as live in those or other gross sins, than we can argue from Rev. xxii. 14, 15, that none shall be shut out of heaven but only those who have lived in the gross sins there mentioned; "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city: For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Nothing is more common in scripture, than in the descriptions it gives, both of the godly and ungodly, together with their general character, to insert into the description some particular excellent practices of the one which grace tends to, and some certain gross sins of the other which there is a foundation for in the reigning corruption in their hearts. So, lying is mentioned as part of the character of all natural men, Psal. lviii. 3, 4. (Who are there called wicked men, as in Psal. l.) "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies: Their poison is like the poison of a serpent," &c. So it is said of the wicked, Psal. x. 2, 3, 4, 7. His mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." This the apostle, Rom. iii. cites as a description of all natural men. So it is said of the wicked, Psal. cxl. 3. "They have sharpened their tongues as a serpent; adder's poison is under their lips;" which the same apostle in the same place, also cites as what is said of all natural men. The very same gross sins which are here mentioned in the fiftieth Psalm, are from time to time inserted in Solomon's descriptions of the wicked man, as opposed to the righteous, in the book of Proverbs: Particularly the sins mentioned in the 19th verse of that Psalm, "Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit;" are thus mentioned, as be-

longing to the character of the wicked man, Prov. xii. "The thoughts of the righteous are right; but the counsels of the wicked are deceit. The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood; but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them." Nevertheless it is plain, that the wise man in his book, in his distinction of the righteous and the wicked, means the same as godly and ungodly. Only reading the two foregoing chapters will be enough to satisfy any of this. Observe chap. x. 3, 7, 16, 20, 21, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and xi. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 30, 31, besides innumerable other like texts all over the book. In chap. i. 16, it is said of sinners, "Their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood." This the apostle, in Romans iii. 15, cites as belonging to the description of all natural men. So in the description of the wicked, Prov. iv. 14....19, it is said, that "they sleep not unless they have done mischief; that they drink the wine of violence," &c. and yet by the wicked there is meant the same with the graceless man; as appears by the antithesis, there made between him and the "just or righteous, whose path is as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day."

As a further evidence that by the wicked in this Psal. l. 16, is meant the same as the ungodly or graceless, it is to be observed, here is a pretty manifest antithesis, or opposition between the wicked and the saints, that shall be gathered to Christ at the day of judgment, spoken of verse 5. There God speaking of his coming to judgment, says, "Gather my saints together, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice:" And then, after shewing the insufficiency of the sacrifices of beasts, implying that that is a greater sacrifice by which these saints make a covenant with him, it is added, "But to the wicked" [that are not in the number of my saints] "God doth say, What hast thou to do, to take my covenant into thy mouth?" Approving of the covenanting of the former, but disapproving the covenanting of the latter. As to the gathering of God's saints, there spoken, if we consider the foregoing and following verses, it is evidently the same with that gathering of his elect, when Christ comes in the clouds of

heaven, which is spoken of, Matth. xxiv. 30, 31; and with that gathering of the righteous, as his wheat into his barn, at the day of judgment, spoken of Matth. xiii. And therefore there is as much reason to suppose, that by the wicked, which are opposed to them, is meant all graceless persons, as there is so to understand the doers of iniquity, spoken of in that Matth. xiii. as those that are opposed to the righteous, which shall then "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, ver. 43. And there is one thing more which still further confirms me in my construction of Psal. l. 16, which is, That the plain reason here given against wicked men's taking God's covenant into their mouths, holds good with respect to all graceless men, viz. Because they do not comply with, but reject the very covenant, which they with their mouths profess to own and consent to. Ver. 17. "Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee:" As much as to say, "Thou rejectest and hast a reigning enmity against my statutes, which thou declarest and professest a compliance with." And this is the spirit and practice of all who live in the sin of unbelief and rejection of Christ; they live in a way that is altogether inconsistent with the covenant of grace; for the sum and substance of the condition and engagement of that covenant is what every natural man is under the reigning power of enmity against, and lives in contradiction to. Therefore, I think, it follows, that they who know it is thus with them, have nothing to do to take God's covenant into their mouths; or, in other words, have no warrant to do this, until it be otherwise with them.

III. The nature of things seems to afford no good reason why the people of Christ should not openly profess a proper respect to him in their hearts, as well as a true notion of him in their heads, or a right opinion of him in their judgments.

I can conceive of nothing reasonably to be supposed the design or end of a public profession of religion, that does not as much require a profession of honor, esteem and friendship of heart towards Christ, as an orthodox opinion about him; or why the former should not be as much expected and required

in order to a being admitted into the company of his friends and followers, as the latter. It cannot be because the former is in itself is not as important, and as much to be looked at, as the latter; seeing the very essence of religion itself consists in the former, and without it the latter is wholly vain, and makes us never the better; neither happier in ourselves nor more acceptable to God. One end of a public profession of religion is the giving public honor to God: But surely the profession of inward esteem and a supreme respect of heart towards God is as agreeable to this design, and more directly tending to it, than the declaring of right speculative notions of him. We look upon it that our friends do the more especially and directly put honor upon us when upon proper occasions they stand ready not only to own the truth of such and such facts concerning us, but also to testify their high esteem and cordial and entire regard to us. When persons only manifest their doctrinal knowledge of things of religion, and express the assent of their judgments, but at the same time make no pretence to any other than a being wholly destitute of all true love to God, and a being under the dominion of enmity against him, their profession is in some respects, very greatly to God's dishonor: For they leave reason for the public greatly to suspect that they hold the truth in unrighteousness, and that they are some of those that have both seen and hated Christ and his Father, John xv. 24. Who of all persons have the greatest sin, and are most to God's dishonor.

I am at a loss, how that visibility of saintship, which the honored author of *The Appeal to the Learned* supposes to be all that is required in order to admission to the Lord's supper, can be much to God's honor, viz. Such a visibility as leaves reason to believe, that the greater part of those who have it, are enemies to God in their hearts, and inwardly the servants of sin. Such a visibility of religion as this, seems rather to increase a visibility of wickedness in the world, and so of God's dishonor, than any thing else; *i. e.* it makes more wickedness visible to the eye of an human judgment, and gives men reason to think, there is more wickedness in the world, than otherwise would be visible to them: Because we have reason

to think, that those who live in a rejection of Christ, under the light of the gospel, and the knowledge and common belief of its doctrine, have vastly greater sin and guilt than other men. And that venerable divine himself did abundantly teach this.

Christ came into the world to engage in a war with God's enemies, *sin* and *Satan*; and a great war there is maintained between them; which war is concerning us; and the contest is, who shall have the possession of OUR HEARTS. Now, it is reasonable under these circumstances, that we should declare on whose side we are, whether on Christ's side, or on the side of his enemies. If we would be admitted among Christ's friends and followers, it is reasonable that we should profess we are *on the Lord's side*, and that we yield OUR HEARTS (which the contest is about) to him, and not to his rivals. And this seems plainly to be the design and nature of a public profession of Christ. If *this* profession is not made, no profession is made that is worth regarding, or worth the making, in such a case as this is, and to any such purpose as a being admitted among his visible friends. There is no other being on Christ's side, in this case, but a being so with an *undivided heart*, preferring him to all his rivals, and renouncing them all for his sake. The case admits of no neutrality, or lukewarmness, or a middle sort of persons with a *moral sincerity*, or such a common faith as is consistent with loving sin and the world better than Christ. *He that is not with me* (says Christ) *is against me*. And therefore none do profess to be on Christ's side but they who profess to renounce his rivals. For those who would be called Christians, to profess no higher regard to Christ than what will admit of a superior regard to the *world*, is more absurd than if a woman pretending to marry a man, and take him for her husband, should profess to take him in some sort, but yet not pretend to take him in such a manner as is inconsistent with her allowing other men a fuller possession of her, and greater intimacy with her than she allows him. The nature of the case, as it stands between us and Jesus Christ, is such, that an open, solemn profession of being entirely for him, and giving him the possession of our hearts, renouncing all competitors,

is more requisite in this case, than a like profession in any other case. The profession of an intermediate sort of state of our mind, is very disagreeable to the nature of Christ's errand, work, and kingdom in the world, and all that belongs to the designs and ends of his administrations; and for ministers and churches openly to establish such a kind of profession of Christ as part of his public service, which does not imply a pretence of any more than lukewarmness, is, I fear, to make a mere sham of a solemn public profession of Christianity, and seems to be wholly without warrant from the word of God, and greatly to God's dishonor.

It cannot be justly here pretended, as a reason why the *opinion concerning doctrines* should be professed, and not *friendship* or *respect of heart*, that the former is more *easily discerned* and known by us than the latter. For though it be true, that men may be at a loss concerning the latter, yet it is as true that they may be so concerning the former too. They may be at a loss in many cases concerning the fulness of the determination of their own inclination and choice; and so they may concerning the fulness of the determination of their judgment. I know of nothing in human nature that hinders the acts of men's wills being properly subject to their own consciousness, any more than the acts of their judgment; nor of any reason to suppose that men may not discern their own *consent* as well as their *assent*. The Scripture plainly supposes gracious dispositions and acts to be things properly under the eye of conscience. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Know ye not your own selves?" John xxi. 15. "Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" And many other places. Nor is the nature of godliness less made known, than the true doctrines of religion. Piety of heart, in the more essential things belonging to it, is as clearly revealed, as the doctrines concerning the nature of God, the person of the Messiah, and the method of his redemption.

IV. We find in the Scripture, that all those of God's professing people, or visible saints who are not *truly pious*, are represented as *counterfeits*, as having *guile*, *disguise*, and a *false appearance*, as making *false pretences*, and as being *de-*

*ceitful* and *hypocrites*.....Thus Christ says of Nathaniel, John i. 47. "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile;" that is, a truly gracious person; implying, that those of God's professing people, who are not gracious, are guileful, and deceitful in their profession. So sinners in Zion, or in God's visible church, are called *hypocrites*. Isa. xxxiii. 14. "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the *hypocrites*." Isa. xi. 17. "Every one is an hypocrite and an evil doer." So they are called *lying children*, Isa. xxx. 9. and chap. lix. 13. and are represented as lying, in pretending to be of *the temple* or church of God. Jer. vii. 2, 4.... "Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord.....Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." They are spoken of as falsely calling themselves of the holy city, Isa. xlviii. 1, 2. They are called *silver dross*, and *reprobate* or *refuse silver*.... (Ezek. xxii. 18. Jer. vi. 30.) which glisters and looks like true silver, but has not its inward worth. So they are compared to *adulterated wine*, Isa. i. 22. and to *trees* full of leaves bidding fair for fruitfulness, Matth. xxi. 19. *Clouds* that look as if they were full of rain, yet bring nothing but wind, Jude, 12. *Wells without water*, that do but cheat the thirsty traveller, 2 Pet. ii. 13. A deceitful bow, that appears good, but fails the archer, Psal. lxxviii. 57. Hos. vii. 16....Mr. Stoddard, in his *Appeal to the Learned*, from time to time supposes all *visible* saints, who are not truly pious, to be hypocrites, as in pages 15, 17, 18.

Now what ground or reason can there be thus to represent those as visible saints or members of God's visible church, who are not truly pious, if the profession of such does not imply any pretence to true piety; and when they never make a pretence to any thing more than common grace, or moral sincerity, which many of them truly have, and therefore are not at all hypocritical or deceitful in their pretences, and are as much without guile, in what they make a profession of, as Nathaniel was? The Psalmist speaking of sincere piety, calls it the truth in the inward parts. Psal. li. 6. Behold,

thou desirest the truth in the inward parts." It is called *truth* with reference to some declaration or profession made by God's visible people; but on the hypothesis which I oppose, common grace is as properly the truth in the inward parts, in this respect, as saving grace. God says, concerning Israel, Deut. xxxii. 5. "Their spot is not the spot of his children." God here speaks of himself as it were disappointed: The words have reference to some *profession* they had made: For why should this remark be made after this manner, that there were *spots* upon them, shrewd marks that they were not his *children*, if they never pretended to be his children, and never were accepted under any such notion to any of the privileges of his people?

God is pleased to represent himself in his word as though he *trusted* the profession of his visible people, and as *disappointed* when they did not approve themselves as his faithful, stedfast, and thorough friends. Isa. lxiii. 8, 9, 10. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie. So he was their Saviour: In all their affliction he was afflicted. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy." The same is represented in many other places. I suppose that God speaks after this manner, because he, in his present, external dealings with his visible people, does not act in the capacity of the Searcher of Hearts, but accommodates himself to their nature, and the present state and circumstances of his church, and speaks to them and treats them after the manner of men, and deals with them in their own way. But, supposing the case to be even thus, there would be no ground for such representations, if there were no profession of true godliness. When God is represented as trusting that men will be his faithful friends, we must understand that he trusts to their pretences. But how improperly would the matter be so represented if there were no pretences to trust to, no pretences of any real, thorough friendship? However there may be a profession of some common affection that is morally sincere, yet there is no pretence of loving him more than, yea not so much as his enemies. What reason to trust that they will be faithful

to God as their master, when the religion they profess amounts to no more than serving two masters? What reason to trust that they will be stable in their ways, when they do not pretend to be of a single heart, and all know that the double minded persons used to be unstable in all their ways? Those who only profess moral sincerity or common grace, do not pretend to love God above the world. And such grace is what God and man know is liable to pass away as the early dew and the morning cloud. If what men profess amounts to nothing beyond lukewarmness, it is not to be expected, that they will be faithful to the death. If men do not pretend to have any oil in their vessels, what cause can there be to trust that their lamps will not go out? If they do not pretend to have any root in them, what cause is there for any disappointment when they wither away.

When God, in the forementioned place, Isa. lxiii. represents himself as trusting Israel's profession, and saying, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; it cannot be understood, as if he trusted that they were his people in that sense, in which the ten tribes were called God's people after they had given up themselves to idolatry for two or three hundred years together without once repenting: But, surely they are my sincere saints and children, as they profess to be, Israelites indeed without guile; for surely they would not do so evil a thing as to make a lying profession. This seems to be the plain import of the words: It therefore shews that the profession they made was of real, vital godliness.

V. The eight first verses of the fifty sixth chapter of Isaiah, I think, afford good evidence, that such qualifications are requisite in order to a due coming to the privileges of a visible church state, as I have insisted on. In the four preceding chapters we have a prophecy of gospel times, the blessed state of things which the Messiah should introduce. The prophecy of the same times is continued in the former part of this chapter. Here we have a prophecy of the abolishing of the ceremonial law, which was a wall of separation, that kept two sorts of persons, viz. Eunuchs and Gentiles, out from the ordinances of the church or congregation of the

Lord (for the words *congregation* and *church* are the same) the place of whose meeting was in God's house, within God's walls, verse 5, and on God's holy mountain, verse 7. That in the ceremonial law, which especially kept out the Gentiles, was the law of circumcision, and the law that the eunuch shall not enter into the congregation or church of the Lord, we have in Deut. xxiii. 1. Now here it is foretold that in the days when "God's salvation shall be come, and his righteousness revealed, by the coming of the Messiah, this wall of separation should be broken down, this ceremonial law removed out of the way (but still taking care to note, that the law of the Sabbath shall be continued, as not being one of those ceremonial observances which shall be abolished); and then it is declared, what is the great qualification which should be looked at in those blessed days, when these external, ceremonial qualifications of circumcision and soundness of body should no more be insisted on, viz. piety of heart and practice, *joining themselves to the Lord, loving the name of the Lord, to be his servants, choosing the things that please him, &c.* Ver. 3. &c. "Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree; for thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place, and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give unto them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant: Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him besides those that are gathered unto him."

VI. The *representations* which CHRIST makes of his *visible church*, from time to time, in his discourses and parables, make the thing manifest which I have laid down.

As particularly the representation which Christ makes in the latter end of Matthew vii. of the final issue of things with respect to the different sorts of members of his visible church: Those that only say, *Lord, Lord*, and those who *do the will of his Father which is in heaven; those who build their house upon a rock*, and *those who build upon the sand*. They are all (of both kinds) evidently such as have pretended to an high honor and regard to Christ, have claimed an interest in him, and accordingly hoped to be finally acknowledged and received as some of his. Those visible Christians who are not true Christians, for the present, cry, Lord, Lord; that is, are forward to profess respect, and claim relation to him; and will be greatly disappointed hereafter in not being owned by him. They shall then come and cry, Lord, Lord. This compellation *Lord*, is commonly given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, as signifying the special relation which Christ stood in to his disciples, rather than his universal dominion. They shall then come, and earnestly claim relation, as it is represented of Israel of old, in the day of their distress, and God's awful judgments upon them, Hos. viii. 2. "Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee."

To *know* does not here intend speculative knowledge, but knowing as one *knows his own*, has a peculiar respect to, and owns and has an interest in. These false disciples shall not only claim interest in Christ, but shall plead and bring arguments to confirm their claim; *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works?* It is evidently the language of those that are dreadfully disappointed. Then (says Christ) *I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. q. d.* "Though they profess a relation to me, I will profess none to them; though they plead that they know me, and have an interest in me, I will declare to them that I never owned them as any of mine; and will bid them depart from me as those that I will never own, nor

have any thing to do with, in such a relation as they claim." Thus all the hopes they had lived in, of being hereafter received and owned by Christ, as in the number of his friends and favorites, are dashed in pieces. This is further illustrated by what follows, in the comparison of the wise man who built his house on a rock; representing those professed disciples who build their hope of an interest in him on a sure foundation, whose house shall stand in the trying day, and the foolish man who built his house on the sand; representing those professed disciples or hearers of his word, who build their opinion and hope of an interest in him on a false foundation, whose house in the great time of trial shall have a dreadful fall, their vain hope shall issue in dismal disappointment and confusion.

On the whole it is manifest that all visible Christians or saints, all Christ's professing disciples or hearers that profess him to be their Lord, according to the scripture notion of professing Christ, are such as profess a saving interest in him and relation to him, and live in the hope of being hereafter owned as those that are so interested and related. By those that hear Christ's sayings, in this place, are not meant merely auditors of the word preached; for there are many such who make no pretence to an interest in Christ, and have no such hope or opinion built on any foundation at all: But those who profess to hearken to, believe, and yield submission to the word of Christ. This is confirmed by the manner in which the matter is expressed in Luke vi. "Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:" i. e. Whosoever visibly comes to me, and is one of my professed disciples, &c.

This matter is confirmed by that parallel representation that Christ gives us in Luke xiii. 25....29, of his final disposal of the two different sorts of persons that are in the kingdom or church of God; viz. those who shall be allowed in his church or kingdom when it comes to its state of glory, and those who, though they have visibly been in it, shall be thrust out of it. It is represented of the latter, that they shall then come and claim relation and interest, and cry, *Lord, Lord, open unto us;* and Christ shall answer and say, *I know you not, whence*

*you are.* As much as to say, "Why do you claim relation and acquaintance with me? You are strangers to me, I do not own you." *Then* (it is said) *they shall begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.* As much as to say, "This is a strange thing that thou dost not own us! We are exceedingly surprised that thou shouldst account us as strangers that have no part in thee, when we have eaten and drunk in thy presence," &c. And when he shall finally insist upon it, that he does not own them, and will have nothing to do with them as his, *then there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;* then they shall be filled with dismal disappointment, confusion and despair, when they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, with whom they expected to dwell forever there, and they themselves thrust out. By this it is evident, that those visible members of the kingdom of God, that hereafter shall be cast out of it, are such as look upon themselves now interested in Christ and the eternal blessings of his kingdom, and make that profession.

The same is manifest by the parable of the ten virgins, Matth. xxv. In the first verse it is said, *The kingdom of heaven* [i. e. the church of Christ] is *likened unto ten virgins.* The two sorts of virgins evidently represent the two sorts of members of the visible church of Christ; the wise, those who are true Christians; and the foolish, those who are apparent, but not true Christians. The foolish virgins were to all appearance the children of the bride chamber; they were such as to appearance had accepted of the invitation to the wedding, which represents the invitations of the gospel, wherein the bridegroom and bride say, *Come;* they herein had testified the same respect to the bridegroom and bride that the wise had: The parable naturally leads us to suppose, that they were to appearance every way of the same society with the wise, pretended to be the same sort of persons, in like manner interested in the bridegroom, and that they were received by the wise under such a notion; they made a profession of the very same kind of honor and regard to the bridegroom, in going forth to meet him with their lamps, as his friends to

shew him respect, and had the same hope of enjoying the privileges and entertainments of the wedding: There was a difference with respect to *oil in their vessels*, but there was no difference with respect to their lamps. One thing intended by their *lamps*, as I suppose is agreed by all, is their *profession*. This is the same in both; and in both it is a profession of *grace*, as a *lamp* (from its known end and use) is a manifestation or shew of *oil*. Another thing signified by the blaze of their lamps seems to be the light of *hope*: Their lamps signify in general the appearance of grace or godliness, including both the appearance of it to the view or judgment of others, and also to their own view, and the judgment they entertain of themselves: Their lamps shone, not only in the eyes of others, but also in their own eyes. This is confirmed, because on the hearing the midnight cry, they find their *lamps are gone out*; which seems most naturally to represent this to us, that however hypocrites may maintain their hopes while they live, and while their Judge is at a distance, yet when they come to be alarmed by the sound of the last trumpet, their hopes will immediately expire and vanish away, and very often fail them in the sensible approaches of death. *Where is the hope of the hypocrite, when God takes away his soul?* But till the midnight cry the *foolish virgins* seem to entertain the same hopes with the wise; when they first went forth with the wise virgins, their lamps shone in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others, in like manner with the lamps of the wise virgins. So that by this parable it also appears, that all visible members of the Christian church, or kingdom of heaven, are those that profess to be *gracious* persons, as looking on themselves, and seeming, or at least pretending, to be such.

And that true piety is what persons ought to look at in themselves as the qualification that is a proper ground for them to proceed upon, in coming into the visible church of Christ, and taking the privileges of its members, I think is evident also from the parable of the *marriage*, which the king made for his son, Matth. xxii. particularly the 11th and 12th verses, "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not a wedding garment; and he

saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." Mr. Stoddard says, (Appeal, page 4, 5) "Here is a representation of the day of judgment; and such persons as come for salvation without a *wedding garment* shall be rejected in that day. So that here being nothing said about the Lord's supper, all arguing from this scripture falls to the ground." Upon which I take leave to observe, that the *king's coming in to see the guests*, means Christ's visiting his professing church at the day of judgment, I make no doubt: But that the *guests' coming into the king's house* means persons coming for salvation at the day of judgment, I am not convinced. If it may properly be represented, that any reprobates will come for salvation at the day of judgment, they will not do so *before* the king appears; but Christ will appear first, and then they will come and cry to him for salvation. Whereas, in this parable the guests are represented as gathered together in the king's house *before* the king appears, and the king as coming in and finding them there; where they had entered while the day of grace lasted, while the door was kept open, and invitations given forth; and not like those who come for salvation at the day of judgment, Luke xiii. 25, who come *after the door is shut, and stand without, knocking at the door.* I think it is apparent beyond all contradiction, that by the guests' coming into the king's house at the invitation of the servants, is intended Jews and Gentiles coming into the Christian church, at the preaching of Christ's apostles and others, making profession of godliness, and expecting to partake of the eternal marriage supper. I shewed before, that that which is called the house of God in the New Testament, is his church. Here in this parable the king first sends forth his servants to *call them that were bidden*, and they would not come; and they having repeatedly rejected the invitation and evil entreated the servants, the king sent forth his armies and burnt up their city; representing the Jews being first invited, and rejecting the invitations of the gospel, and persecuting Christ's ministers, and so provoking God to give up Jerusalem and the nation to destruction. Then the king sends forth his servants into the

high ways, to call in all sorts; upon which many flocked into the king's house; hereby most plainly representing the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, and their flocking into the Christian church. This gathering of the Gentiles into the king's house, is BEFORE the day of judgment, and the man without the wedding garment among them. It fitly represents the resorting that should be to the Christian church, during the day of grace, through all ages; but by no means signifies men's coming for salvation *after* the day of grace is at an end, at Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven. Let this parable be compared with that parallell place, Luke xiv. 16....24. The company gathered to the marriage in this parable, plainly represents the same thing with the company of virgins gathered to the marriage in the other parable, Matth. xxv. viz. the company of visible saints, or the company belonging to the visible kingdom of heaven; and therefore both parables are introduced alike with these words, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto*, &c. As to the man's being cast out of the king's house when the king comes in to see his guests, it is agreeable to other representations made of false Christians being *thrust out of God's kingdom* at the day of judgment; *the servant's not abiding in the house forever, though the son abideth ever: God's taking away their part out of the holy city, and blotting their names out of the book of life*, &c.

Mr. Stoddard says, "This person that had not a wedding garment, was a reprobate; but every one that partakes of the Lord's supper without grace is not a reprobate." I answer, all that will be found in the king's house without grace when the king comes in to see the guests, are doubtless reprobates.

If it be questioned whether by the wedding garment be meant true piety, or whether hereby is not intended moral sincerity, let the scripture interpret itself; which elsewhere tells us plainly what the wedding garment is at the marriage of the Son of God: Rev. xix. 7, 8. "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

None, I suppose will say, this righteousness that is so pure, is the common grace of lukewarm professors, and those that go about to serve God and mammon. The same wedding garment we have account of in Psal. xlv. 13, 14. "The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold: She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle work." But we need go no where else but to the parable itself; that alone determines the matter. The wedding garment spoken of as that without which professors will be excluded from among God's people at the day of judgment, is not moral sincerity, or common grace, but special saving grace. If common grace were the wedding garment intended, not only would the king cast out those that he found *without* a wedding garment, but also many *with* a wedding garment: For all such as shall be found then with no better garment than moral sincerity will be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness; such a wedding garment as this will not save them. So that true piety, unfeigned faith, or the righteousness of Christ which is upon every one that believeth, is doubtless the wedding garment intended. But if a person has good and proper ground to proceed on in *coming into the king's house*, that knows he is without this wedding garment, why should the king upbraid him, saying, *How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?* And why should he be speechless, when asked such a question? Would he not have had a good answer to make? viz. "Thou thyself hast given me leave to come in hither, without a wedding garment." Or this, thy own word is my warrant; which invited such as had only common grace or moral sincerity to come in."

VII. If we consider what took place, in *fact*, in the manner and circumstances of the *admission* of members into the primitive Christian church, and the profession they made in order to their admission, as we have these things recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, it will further confirm the point I have endeavored to prove.

We have an account from time to time, concerning these, of their first being awakened by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers, and earnestly inquiring what they

should do to be saved; and of their being directed to *repent and believe on the Lord Jesus*, as the way to have their sins blotted out, and to be saved; and then upon their *professing* that they did believe, of their being baptized and admitted into the Christian church. Now can any reasonably imagine, that these primitive converts, when they made that profession in order to their admission, had any such *distinction* in view as that which some now make, of two sorts of real Christianity, two sorts of sincere faith and repentance, one with a moral and another with a gracious sincerity? Or that the apostles, who discipled them and baptized them, had instructed them in any such distinction? The history informs us of their teaching them but one faith and repentance; *believing in Christ that they might be saved*, and *repentance for the remission of sins*; and it would be unreasonable to suppose, that a thought of any lower or other kind entered into the heads of these converts, when immediately upon their receiving such instructions they professed faith and repentance; or that those who admitted them understood them as meaning any lower or other kind in what they professed.

Let us particularly consider what we are informed concerning those multitudes whose admission we have an account of in Acts ii. We are told concerning the *three thousand* first converts, how that they were greatly awakened by the preaching of the apostles, pricked in their hearts, made sensible of their guilt and misery; "and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" i. e. What shall we do to be saved, and that our sins may be remitted? Upon which they directed them what they should do, viz. *Repent and be baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins.* They are here directed into the way of salvation, viz. Faith and repentance, with a proper profession of these. Then, we are told, that "they which gladly received the word, were baptized;" that is, They which appeared gladly to receive the word, or manifested and professed a cordial and cheerful compliance which the calls of the word, with the directions which the apostles had given them. The manifestation was doubtless by some profession, and the pro-

fession was of that repentance for the remission of sins, and that faith in Christ, which the apostles had directed them to, in answer to their inquiry, *what they should do to be saved*: I can see no ground to suppose they thought of any lower or other kind. And it is evident by what follows, that these converts now looked upon it that they had complied with these directions, and so were at peace with God: Their business now is to rejoice and praise God from day to day: *They continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship.....continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God.* The account of them now is not as of persons under awakenings, weary and heavy laden sinners, under an awful sense of guilt and wrath, pricked in their hearts, as before; but of persons whose sorrow was turned into joy, looking on themselves as now in a good estate. And in the last verse it is said, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved;" in the original it is τους σωζομενους, *the saved*, οι σωζομενοι was a common appellation given to all visible Christians, or to all members of the visible Christian church. It is as much as to say, *the converted*, or *the regenerate*. Being converted is in Scripture called a being *saved*, because it is so in effect; they were "passed from death to life," John v. 24. Tit. i. 4. "According to his mercy he SAVED us, by the washing of REGENERATION, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." 2 Tim. i. 9. "Who hath SAVED us, and called us with an holy calling." Not that all who were added to the visible church were indeed regenerated, but they were so in profession and repute, and therefore were so in name. 1 Cor. i. 18. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us [i. e. us Christians] which are *saved* [τοις σωζομενοις] it is the power of God." So those that from time to time were added to the primitive church, were all called οι σωζομενοι, *the saved*. Before, while under awakenings, they used to inquire of their teachers what they should do to be *saved*; and the directions that used to be given them, were to *repent* and *believe in Christ*; and before they were admitted into the church, they profess-

of that they did so; and thenceforward, having visibly complied with the terms proposed, they were called THE SAVED; it being supposed, that they now had obtained what they inquired after when they asked what they should do to be *saved*. Accordingly we find that after that, from time to time, Christ's ministers treated them no more as miserable perishing sinners, but as true converts; not setting before them their sin and misery to awaken them, and to convince them of the necessity of a Saviour, exhorting them to fly from the wrath to come, and seek conversion to God; but exhorting them to *hold fast the profession of their faith*, to *continue in the grace of God*, and persevere in holiness; endeavoring by all means to *confirm* and *strengthen them* in grace. Thus when a great number believed and turned to the Lord at Antioch, Barnabas was sent to them; "who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord." Acts xi. 23. See also Acts xlii. 43. And xiv. 22, and xv. 32, 41, and xx. 32. And when the apostles heard of the conversion of the Gentiles to the Christian faith, visible by their profession when they joined themselves to the Christian church, they in charity supposed andbelieved that God had given them saving repentance, and an heart purifying faith. Acts xi. 18. "When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God saying, Then hath God also granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life." Chap. xv. 9. "And put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith*."

If any should here object that when such multitudes were converted from Judaism and Heathenism, and received into the Christian church in so short a season, it was impossible there should be *time* for each one to say so much in his public profession, as to be any credible exhibition of true godliness to the church: I answer, This objection will soon vanish, if we particularly consider how the case was with those primitive converts, and how they were dealt with by their teachers. It was apparently the manner of the first preachers of the gospel, when their hearers were awakened and brought in good earnest to inquire what they should do to be

saved, then particularly to instruct them in the way of salvation, and explain to them what qualifications must be in them, or what they must do in order to their being saved, agreeable to Christ's direction, Mark xvi. 15, 16. This we find was the method they took with the *three thousand*, in the second chapter of Acts, verse 37....40. And it seems they were particular and full in it: They said much more to them than the words recorded. It is said, verse 40. "With many other words did Peter testify and exhort." And this we find to be the course Paul and Silas took with the gaoler, chap. xvi. Who also gave more large and full instructions than are rehearsed in the history. And when they had thus instructed them, they doubtless saw to it, either by themselves or some others who assisted them, that their instructions were *understood* by them, before they proceeded to baptize them (for I suppose none with whom I have to do in this controversy, will maintain, from the apostles' example, that we ought not to insist on a good degree of doctrinal knowledge in the way and terms of salvation, as requisite to the admission of members into the church.) And after they were satisfied that they well understood these things, it took up no great time to make a profession of them, or to declare that they did, or found in themselves, those things they had been told of as necessary to their salvation. To be sure, after they had been well informed what saving faith and repentance were, it took up no more time to profess *that* faith and repentance, than any other. In this case, not only the converts words, but the words of the preacher, which they consented to, and in effect made their own, are to be taken into their profession. For persons that are known to be of an honest character, and manifestly qualified with good doctrinal knowledge of the nature of true godliness, in the more essential things which belong to it, solemnly to profess they have or do those things, is to make as credible a profession of godliness as I insist upon. And we may also well suppose, that more words were uttered by the professors, and with other circumstances to render them credible, than are recorded in that very brief summary history, which we have of the primitive church

in the Acts of the apostles; and also we may yet suppose one thing further, viz. that in that extraordinary state of things so particular a profession was not requisite in order to the church's satisfaction, either of doctrines *assented* to, or of the *consent* and disposition of the heart, as may be expedient in a more ordinary state of things; for various reasons that might be given, would it not too much lengthen out this discourse.

One thing which makes it very evident, that the inspired ministers of the primitive Christian church looked upon *saving faith* as the proper matter of the profession requisite in order to admission into the church, is the story of Philip and the eunuch, in Acts viii. For when the eunuch desires to be baptized, Philip makes answer, verse 37. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Which words certainly imply, that *believing with all his heart* was requisite in order to his coming to this ordinance properly and in a due manner. I cannot conceive what should move Philip to utter these words, or what he should aim at in them, if he at the same time supposed, that the eunuch had no manner of need to look at any such qualification in himself, or at all to inquire whether he had such a faith or no, in order to determine whether he might present himself as the subject of baptism; many that are without it, being as properly qualified for this, as they that have it.

It is said by some, that Philip intended nothing more by *believing with all his heart*, than that he believed that doctrine, that *Jesus Christ was the Son of God*, with a moral sincerity of persuasion. But here again I desire the scripture may be allowed to be its own interpreter. The Scripture very much abounds with such phrases as this, *with all the heart*, or *with the whole heart*, in speaking of religious matters. And the manifest intent of them is to signify a gracious simplicity and godly sincerity. Thus, 1 Sam. xii. 20. "Turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart." So verse 24. "Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth, with all your heart." 1 Kings viii. 23. "Who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their heart." Chap. xiv. 8. "My servant

David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart." 2 Kings x. 31. "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart." 2 Chron. xxii. 9. "Jehoshaphat sought the Lord with all his heart." Chap. xxxi. 20, 21. "Hezekiah wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God; and in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart." Psal. ix. 1. "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart." Psal. lxxxvi. 12. "I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and will glorify thy name." Psal. cxi. 1. "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright." And cxix. 2. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." Verse 10. "With my whole heart have I sought thee." Verse 34. "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart." Verse 69. "The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart." Jer. xxiv. 7. "And I will give them an heart to know me.....for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." Joel ii. 12, 13. "Turn ye even unto me with all your heart....and rent your heart, and not your garments." And we have the like phrases in innumerable other places. And I suppose that not so much as one place can be produced, wherein there is the least evidence or appearance of their being used to signify any thing but a *gracious sincerity*. And indeed it must be a very improper use of language, to speak of those as performing acts of religion *with all their hearts*, whose heart the Scriptures do abundantly represent as under the reigning power of sin and unbelief, and as those that do not give God their hearts, but give them to other things; as those who go about to *serve two masters*, and as those who indeed *draw near to God with their lips*, but have at the same time their hearts *far from him*, and running more after other things; and who have not a *single eye*, nor *single heart*. The word *believe*, in the New Testament, answers to the word *trust* in the Old; and therefore

the phrase used by Philip, of *believing with all the heart* is parallel to that in Proverbs iii. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." And *believing with the heart*, is a phrase used in the New Testament to signify *saving* faith....Rom. x. 9, 10. "If thou shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." The same is signified by *obeying the form of doctrine from the heart*, Rom. vi. 17, 18. "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you; being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Here it is manifest, that *saving faith* is intended by obeying the form of doctrine *from the heart*. And the same is signified as if it had been said, *ye have believed with the heart* the form of doctrine. But Philip uses a yet stronger expression, he does not only say, *if thou believest with the heart*, or from the heart, *but with* ALL *thine heart*. And besides, for any to suppose, that those same persons which the Scriptures represent in some places as under the power of an *evil heart of unbelief*; and as *double minded* with regard to their faith (James i. 6, 7, 8) and as those who though they *believe for a while*, yet have their hearts like a *rock*, in which faith has *no root*, (Luke viii.) and yet that this same sort of persons are in other Scriptures spoken of as *believing with all their heart*; I say, for any to suppose this, would be to make the sound or voice of God's word not very harmonious and consonant to itself. And one thing more I would observe on this head, there is good reason to suppose that Philip, while he sat in the chariot with the eunuch, and (as we are told) *preached unto him Jesus*, had shewed to him the way of salvation, had opened to him the way of getting an interest in Christ, or obtaining salvation by him, viz. believing in him, agreeably to Christ's own direction, Mark xvi. 15, 16. And agreeably to what we find to be the manner of the first preachers of the gospel: And therefore now when after this discourse he puts it to the eunuch, whether he *believed with all his heart*; it is natural to suppose, that he meant whether he found his *heart* acquiesc-

ing in the gospel way of salvation, or whether he sincerely exercised that *belief in Christ* which he had been inculcating; and it would be natural for the eunuch so to understand him.

Here if it be objected that the eunuch's answer, and the profession he hereupon made (wherein he speaks nothing of his *heart*, but barely says) *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, shows that he understood no more by the inquiry than whether he gave his *assent* to that doctrine: To this I answer; we must take this confession of the eunuch's together with Philip's words, which they were a reply to, and expound the one by the other. Nor is there any reason but to understand it in the same sense in which we find the words of the like confession elsewhere in the New Testament, and as the words of such a confession were wont to be used in those days, as particularly the words of Peter's confession, Matth. xvi. 16. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:" Which was a profession of saving faith, as appears by what Christ says upon it. And we read, 1 Cor. xii. 3. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Not but that a man might make a profession in these words without the Holy Ghost, but he could not do it heartily, or WITH ALL HIS HEART. So 1 John iv. 15. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." i. e. Whoever makes this Christian confession (this profession which all Christians were wont to make) cordially, or with his whole heart, God dwells in him, &c. But it was *thus* that the eunuch was put upon making this confession.

VIII. It is apparent by the epistles of the apostles to the primitive Christian churches, their manner of addressing and treating them throughout all those epistles, and what they say *to* them and *of* them, that all those churches were constituted of members so qualified as has been represented, having such a visibility of godliness as has been insisted on; those who were reputed to be *real saints*, were taken into the church under a *notion* of their being truly pious persons, made that *profession*, and had this *hope* of themselves; and that

*natural* and *graceless* men were not admitted designedly, but *unawares*, and beside the aim of the primitive churches and ministers; and that such as remained in good standing, and free from an offensive behavior, continued to have the reputation and esteem of real saints, with the apostles, and one with another.

There were numbers indeed in these churches, who after their admission fell into an offensive behavior; some of which the apostles, in their epistles, speak doubtfully of; others that had behaved themselves very scandalously, they speak of in language that seems to suppose them to be wicked men. The Apostle Paul in his epistles to the Corinthians, oftentimes speaks of some among them that had embraced heretical opinions, and had behaved themselves in a very disorderly and schismatical manner, whom he represents as exposed to censure, and to whom he threatens excommunication; and upon occasion of so many offences of this kind appearing among them that for a while had been thought well of, he puts them all upon *examining* themselves, whether they were indeed *in the faith*, and whether Christ was truly *in them*, as they and others had supposed, 2 Cor. xiii. And the same apostle speaks of great numbers among the Galatians, who had made a high profession, and were such as he had thought well of when they were first admitted into the church, but since had given him cause to *doubt* of their state, by giving heed to seducers, that denied the great gospel doctrine of *justification by faith alone*: Yet notwithstanding, the apostle speaks of them in such language as shews surprise and disappointment, and implies that he had looked upon them as true Christians, and hoped that his labors among them had had a saving effect upon them. Gal. i. 6. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel." Chap. iv. 11. "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." And ver. 20. "I desire to be present with you now, and change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you." As much as to say, "I have heretofore addressed you with the voice of love and charity, as supposing you the dear children of God; but now I begin to think of

speaking to you in other language." In the same chapter, to shew them what little reason he had to expect that they would come to this, he puts them in mind of the *great profession* they had made, and the extraordinary appearances there had formerly been in them of fervent piety. Ver. 15. "Where is the blessedness you spake of? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them unto me." The Apostle James in his epistle, speaks of scandalous persons among the *twelve tribes that were scattered abroad*; some that were men of *unbridled tongues*; some that seem to have been a kind of Antinomians in their principles, and of a very bitter and violent spirit, that reproached, condemned, and *cursed* their brethren, and raised *wars* and *fightings* among professing Christians, and were also very unclean in their practice, *adulterers* and *adulteresses*, chap. iv. 4. And in the 5th chapter of his epistle, he seems to speak to the unbelieving Jews, who persecuted the Christians, ver. 6. And the apostles are also often speaking of some that had once been admitted into the church, *crept in unawares*, who had apostatized from Christianity, and finally proved notoriously wicked men. But otherwise, and as to such members of the visible church as continued in the same good standing and visibility of Christianity, wherein they were admitted, it is evident by the epistles of the apostles, they were all in the eye of a Christian judgment *truly pious* or *gracious* persons. And here I desire the following things may be particularly observed.

The apostles continually, in their epistles speak *to* them and *of* them, as supposing and judging them to be gracious persons. Thus the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the church of the Romans, chap. i. 7, speaks of the members of that church as *beloved of God*. In chap. vi. 17, 18, &c. he "thanks God, that they had obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which had been delivered them, and were made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness," &c. The apostle in giving thanks to God for this, must not only have a kind of *negative charity* for them, as not knowing but that they were gracious persons, and so *charitably hoping* (as we say) that it

was so; but he seems to have formed a *positive judgment* that they were such: His thanksgiving must at least be founded on rational probability; since it would be but mocking of God to give him *thanks* for bestowing a mercy which at the same time he did not see reason positively to believe was bestowed. In chap. vii. 4, 5, 6, the apostle speaks of them as those that once *were in the flesh*, and *were under the law*, but now *delivered from the law, and dead to it*. In chap. viii. 15, and following verses, he tells them, *they had received the Spirit of adoption*, and speaks of them as *having the witness of the Spirit that they were the children of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*. And the whole of his discourse, to the end of the chapter, implies, that he esteemed them truly gracious persons. In chap. ix. 23, 24, he speaks of the Christian Romans, together with all other Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, as *vessels of mercy*. In chap. xiv. 6, 7, 8, speaking of the difference that then was among professing Christians, in point of regard to the ceremonial institutions of the law, he speaks of both parties as acting from a gracious principle, and as those that lived to the Lord, and should die unto the Lord: "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord, &c. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man, [i. e. *none of us*] dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." In chap. xv. 14, he says, "I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye are full of goodness." His being thus persuaded implies a positive judgment of charity. And the same apostle in his first epistle to the Corinthians, directs it to "the church at Corinth, that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus;" i. e. to all visible Christians through the world, or all the members of Christ's visible church every where: And continuing his speech of these, chap. i. 8, he speaks of them as those "that God would confirm to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ:" Plainly speaking of them all, as persons, in Christian esteem, savingly converted. In the next verse, he speaks of the *faithfulness of God* as engag-

ed thus to preserve them to salvation, *having called them to the fellowship of his Son.* And in the 30th verse, he speaks of them as having a saving interest in Christ; "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus; who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." In chap. iii. 21, 22, 23, he says to the members of the church of Corinth, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's." In chapter iv. 15, he tells them, *he had begotten them through the gospel.* In chap. vi. 1, 2, 3, he speaks of them as, "those who shall judge the world, and shall judge angels:" And in ver. 11, he says to them, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God." And in chap. xv. 49, to the end, he speaks of them as having an interest, with him and other Christians, in the happiness and glory of the *resurrection of the just.* And in his second epistle, chap. i. 7, he says to them, "Our hope of you is stedfast; knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." This stedfast hope implies a positive judgment. We must here understand the apostle to speak of such members of the church of Corinth, as had not visibly backsliden, as they whom he elsewhere speaks doubtfully of. Again, in the 14th and 15th verses, he speaks of a *confidence* which he had that they *should be his rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.* In all reason, we must conclude, there was a visibility of grace, carrying with it an apparent probability in the eyes of the Apostle, which was the ground of this his *confidence.* Such an apparent probability, and his confidence as built upon it, are both expressed in chap. iii. 3, 4. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart; and such trust have we through Christ to God ward." And in ver. 18, the apostle speaks of them, with himself and other Christians, as *all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord,* and *being changed into the same image from glory to glory.* And in the epistle to the churches of Galatia,

chap. iv. 26, the apostle speaks of visible Christians, as visibly belonging to heaven, the Jerusalem *which is above*. And ver. 28. 29, represents them to be the *children of the promise as Isaac was; and born after the Spirit*. In the 6th verse of the same chapter, he says to the Christian Galatians, *because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father*. And in chap. vi. 1, he speaks of those of them that had not fallen into scandal, as *spiritual persons*.....In his Epistle to that great church of Ephesus, at the beginning, he blesses God on behalf of the members of that church, as being, together with himself and all *the faithful in Christ Jesus*, "Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein God had made them accepted in the beloved; in whom they had redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins." In chap. i. 13, 14, he thus writes to them, "In whom ye also trusted....In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." And in chap. ii. at the beginning; "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." With much more, shewing that they were in a charitable esteem, regenerated persons, and heirs of salvation. So in the Epistle to the members of the church of Philippi, the apostle saluting them in the beginning of it, tells them, that he "thanks God upon every remembrance of them for their fellowship in the gospel; being *confident* of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work in them, would perform it until the day of Christ: Even (says he) as it is meet for me to think this of you all." If it was meet for him to think this of them, and to be confident of it, he had at least some appearing rational probability to found his judgment and confidence upon; for surely it is not *meet* for reasonable creatures to *think* at random, and be *confident* without reason. In verses 25, 26, he speaks of his "confidence that he should come to them for their furtherance and joy of faith, that their

rejoicing might be more abundant in Christ Jesus." Which words certainly suppose that they were persons who had already received Christ and comfort in him; had already obtained faith and joy in Christ, and only needed to have it increased.....In the Epistle to the members of the church of COLOSSE, the apostle, saluting them in the beginning of the epistle, "gives thanks for their faith in Christ Jesus, and love to all saints, and the hope laid up for them in heaven;" and speaks of "the gospel's bringing forth fruit in them, since the day they knew the grace of God in truth;" i. e. since the day of their saving conversion. In chap. i. 8, he speaks of "their love in the Spirit." Verses 12, 13, 14, he speaks of them as made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; *as* being delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; *as* having redemption through Christ's blood, and the forgiveness of sins." In chap. iii. at the beginning, he speaks of them as "risen with Christ; *as* being dead [i. e. *to the law, to sin, and the world*] *as having* their life hid with Christ in God;" and being such as "when Christ their life should appear, should appear with him in glory." In ver. 7, he speaks of them as "having once walked and lived in lusts, but having now put off *the old* man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." In the first Epistle to the members of the church of Thessalonica, in words annexed to his salutation, chap. i. he declares what kind of visibility there was of their *election of God*, in the appearance there had been of true and saving conversion, and their consequent holy life, verse 3....7. And in the beginning of the second epistle, he speaks of their *faith and love greatly increasing*; and in verse 7, expresses his *confidence* of meeting them in eternal *rest*, when *the Lord Jesus Christ should be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels*. And in chap. ii. 13, He *gives thanks to God, that from the beginning he had chosen them to salvation*....In the Epistle to the Christian Hebrews, though the apostle speaks of some that once belonged to their churches, but had apostatized and proved themselves hypocrites; yet concerning the rest that remained in good stand-

ing, he says, chap. vi. 9, *I am persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.* (Where we may again note, his being thus persuaded, evidently implies a positive judgment.) And in chap. xii. 22, &c. he speaks of them as visibly belonging to the glorious society of *heaven.* And in chap. xiii. 5, 6, he speaks of them as those who may *boldly say, The Lord is my helper*.....The Apostle James, writing to the Christians of the *twelve tribes which were scattered abroad,* speaks of them as regenerated persons (meaning as I observed before, those which were in good standing) chap. i. 18. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures....The Apostle Peter, writing to the Jewish Christians, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythinia (large countries, and therefore they must in the whole be supposed to be a great multitude of people) to all these the apostle in the inscription or direction of his first Epistle, gives the title of *elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* And in the verses next following, speaks of them as regenerated, "or begotten again to a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible," &c. And as "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation: And says to them in verses 8, 9. "Whom (*namely Christ*) having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." And in verse 18, to the end, the apostle speaks of them as "redeemed from their vain conversation, by the precious blood of Christ....And as having purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit....Being born again of incorruptible seed," &c. And in the former part of chap. ii. he speaks of them as "living stones, coming to Christ, and on him built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ....*And as* those that believe, to whom Christ is precious....*As* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, called out of darkness into mar-

vellous light." The church at Babylon, occasionally mentioned in chap. v. 13, is said to be *elected together with them*. And in his second Epistle (which appears by chap. iii. 1, to be written to the same persons) the inscription is, *To them which have obtained like precious faith with us*, i. e. with the apostles and servants of Christ. And in the third chapter, he tells them both his Epistles were designed to *stir up their* PURE *minds*. In the first Epistle of John, written (for ought appears) to professing Christians in general, chap. ii. 12, &c. the apostle tells them, "He writes to them because their sins were forgiven, because they had known him that was from the beginning....Because they had overcome the wicked one," &c. In verses 20, 21, he tells them "they have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things; and that he did not write to them because they had *not* known the truth, but because they *had* known it," &c. And in verse 27, he says, "The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." And in the beginning of chap. iii. he addresses them as those who were the sons of God, who when he should appear, should be like him, because they should see him as he is." In chap. iv. 4, he says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome," &c.....The Apostle Jude, in his general Epistle, speaks much of apostates and their wickedness; but to other professing Christians, that had not fallen away, he says, verses 20, 21, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life:" Plainly supposing, that they had professed faith with love to God our Saviour, and were by the apostle considered as his friends and lovers....Many other passages to the like purpose might be observed in the epistles, but these may suffice.

Now how unaccountable would these things be, if the case was, that the members of the primitive Christian churches were not admitted into them under any such notion as their

being really godly persons and heirs of eternal life, nor with any respect of such a character appearing on them; and that they themselves joined to these churches without any such pretence, as having no such opinion of themselves!

But it is particularly evident that they had such an opinion of themselves, as well as the apostles of them, by many things the apostles say in the epistles. Thus, in Rom. viii. 15, 16, the apostle speaks of them as "having received the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of God bearing witness with their spirits, that they were the children of God." And chap. v. 2. Of their rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."....In 1 Cor. i. 7. He speaks of them as waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus." In chap. xv. 17, the apostle says to the members of the church of Corinth, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins:" Plainly supposing that they hoped their sins were forgiven....In Philip i. 25, 26, the apostle speaks of his coming to Philippi, to "increase their joy of faith, and that their rejoicing in Christ might be more abundant:" Implying (as was observed before) that they had received comfort already, in some degree as supposing themselves to have a saving interest in Christ....In 1 Thess. i. 10, he speaks of the members of the church of Thessalonica as "waiting for Christ from heaven, *as one* who had delivered them from the wrath to come."....In Heb. vi. 9, 19, he speaks of the Christian Hebrews as having that "hope which was an anchor to their souls."....The Apostle Peter, 1 Epist. i. 3....6, 8, 9, speaks of the visible Christians he wrote to, as being "begotten to a living hope, of an inheritance incorruptible, &c. Wherein they greatly rejoiced," &c ....And even the members of the church of Laodicea, the very worst of all the seven churches of Asia, yet looked upon themselves as truly gracious persons, and made that profession; they said, "*they* were rich, and increased in goods, and knew not that they were wretched and miserable," &c. Rev. iii. 17.

It is also evident, that the members of these primitive churches had this judgment one of another, and of the members of the visible church of Christ in general....In 1 Thess.

iv. 13, &c. the apostle exhorts the Christian Thessalonians, in mourning for their deceased friends who were visible Christians, *not to sorrow* as the hopeless Heathen were wont to do for their departed friends; and that upon this consideration, that they had reason to expect to meet them again *in* glorious circumstances at the day of judgment, never to part more. The ground of comfort concerning their dead friends, which the apostle here speaks of, is evidently something *more* than such an hope as it may be supposed we ought to have of all that profess Christian doctrines, and are not *scandalous* in life, whom we must forbear to censure, because we do not know but they are true saints. The members of the church of Sardis, next to Laodicea, the worst of the seven churches of Asia, yet *had a name that they lived*; though Christ, who speaks of these seven churches from heaven, in the character of the Searcher of Hearts (*see* Rev. *ii.* 23) explicitly tells them that they were dead; perhaps all in a dead frame, and the most in a dead state.

These things evidently shew, how all the Christian churches through the world were constituted in those days; and what sort of *holiness* or *saintship* it was, that all visible Christians in good standing had a *visibility* and *profession* of, in that apostolic age; and also what sort of visibility of this they *had*, viz. not only that which gave them right to a kind of negative charity, or freedom from censure, but that which might justly induce a positive judgment in their favor. The churches that these epistles were written to, were all the principal churches in the world; some of them very large, as the churches of Corinth and Ephesus. Some of the epistles were directed to all the churches through large countries where the gospel had had great success, as the epistle to the Galatians. The epistle to the Hebrews was written to all the Jewish Christians in the land of Canaan, in distinction from the Jews that lived in other countries, who were called Hellenists or Grecians, because they generally spake the Greek tongue. The epistles of Peter were written to all the Christian Jews through many countries, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythynia; where were great numbers of

Jews, beyond any other Gentile countries. The epistle of James was directed to all Christian Jews, scattered abroad through the whole world. The epistles of John and Jude, for ought appears in those epistles, were directed to all visible Christians through the whole world. And the Apostle Paul directs the first epistle to the Corinthians, not only to the members of that church, but to all professing Christians through the face of the earth: 1 Cor. i. 2, and chap. xiv. 33, speaking of the churches in general, he calls them *all churches of the saints*. And by what Christ says to the churches of Sardis and Laodicea in the Apocalypse, of whom more evil is said than of any Christian churches spoken of in the New Testament, it appears that even the members of those churches looked on themselves as in a state of salvation, and had such a name with others.

Here possibly some may object, and say, it will not follow from the apostles speaking to, and of the members of the primitive church after the manner which has been observed, as though they supposed them to be *gracious* persons, that therefore a *profession* and *appearance* of this was looked upon in those days as a requisite *qualification* for admission into the visible church; because another reason may be given for it, viz. Such was the *extraordinary* state of things at that day, that it so came to pass, that the *greater part* of those converted from Heathenism and Judaism to Christianity, were *hopefully gracious persons*, by reason of its being a day of such large communications of divine grace, and such great and unavoidable sufferings of professors, &c. And the apostles knowing those facts, might properly speak to, and of the churches, as if they were societies of truly gracious persons, because there was just ground on such accounts, to think the greater part of them to be so; although no profession or visibility of this was requisite in their members by the *constitution* of those churches, and the door of admission was as open for *others* as for such.

But it will appear, this cannot be a satisfactory nor true account of the matter, if we consider the following things.

(1.) The apostles in the very *superscription* or direction of their letters to these churches, and in their *salutations* at the beginning of their epistles, speak of them as gracious persons. For instance, the Apostle Peter, in the direction of his first letter to all professing Jewish Christians through many countries, says thus, "To the strangers scattered through Pontus, &c. elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." And in directing his second epistle to the same persons, he says thus, "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that *have obtained* like precious faith with us," &c. And the Apostle Paul directs his epistle to the Romans thus, "To them that be at Rome beloved of God." So he directs his first epistle to the Corinthians thus, "Unto the church of God *which is* at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus." *In what* sense he means *sanctified*, his following words shew, ver. 4, 7, 8, 9. The same was before observed of words *annexed* to the apostle's salutations, in the beginning of several of the epistles. This shews that the apostles extend this *character* as far as they do the *epistles* themselves. Which surely would be very improper, and not agreeable to truth, if the apostles at the same time knew very well that such a character *did* not belong to members of churches, as such, and that they were not received into those churches with any regard to such a character, or upon the account of any right they had to be esteemed such manner of persons. In the superscription of letters to societies of men, we are wont to give them that *title* or *denomination* which properly belongs to them as members of such a body. Thus, if one should write to the Royal Society in London, or the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, it would be proper and natural to give them the title of Learned; for whether every one of the members truly deserve the epithet, or not, yet the title is agreeable to their *profession*, and what is known to be aimed at, and is professedly insisted on, in the admission of members. But if one should write to the House of Commons, or to the East India Company, and in his superscription give them the title of Learned, this would be

very improper and illjudged; because that character does not belong to their profession *as* members of that body, and *learning* is not a qualification looked at or insisted on in their admission of members: Nor would it excuse the impropriety, though the writer might, from his special acquaintance, know it to be fact, that the greater part of them were men of learning. If one man should happen once thus to inscribe a letter to them, it would be something strange; but more strange, if he should do it from time to time, or if it should appear, by various instances, to be a custom so to direct letters to such societies; as it seems to be the manner of the apostles, in their epistles to Christian churches, to address them under titles which imply a profession and visibility of *true holiness*.

(2.) The Apostle John, in his general epistle, does very plainly manifest, that all whom he wrote to were *supposed* to have true grace, inasmuch as he declares this the qualification he has respect to in writing to them, and lets them know he writes to them for that reason, because they are supposed to be persons of the character of such as *have known God, overcome the wicked one*, and *have had their sins forgiven them*. 1 John ii. 12, 13, 14, 21.

(3.) The apostles, when speaking of such as they write to, viz. visible Christians, as a *society*, and representing what belongs to such a kind or sort of society as the visible church is, they speak of it as visibly (i. e. in profession and reputation) a *society* of gracious persons. So the Apostle Peter speaks of them as a spiritual *house*, an holy and royal *priesthood*, an holy *nation*, a peculiar *people*, a chosen or elect *generation*, called out of darkness into marvellous light. 1 Pet. ii. The Apostle Paul also speaks of them as the *family* of God. Eph. ii. 19. And in the next chapter he explains himself to mean that family, a part of which is *in heaven*; i. e. they were by profession and in visibility a part of that heavenly and divine family.

(4.) The Apostle Paul speaks expressly, and from time to time, of the members of the churches he wrote to, as *all* of them in esteem and visibility truly gracious persons. Philip. i. 6. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of the

Lord Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me to think this of YOU ALL," (that is, all singly taken, not collectively, according to the distinction before observed.) So Gal. iv. 26. "Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of US ALL." Rom. vi. "As MANY OF US as have been baptized into Christ, have been baptized into his death." Here he speaks of *all* that have been baptized; and in the continuation of the discourse, explaining what is here said, he speaks of their being "dead to sin; no longer under the law, but under grace; having obeyed the form of doctrine from the heart, being made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness," &c. Rom. xiv. 7, 8. NONE OF US liveth to himself, and NO MAN "dieth to himself" (taken together with the context); 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We ALL with open face, beholding as in a glass," &c. and Gal. iii. "Ye are ALL the children of God by faith."

(5.) It is evident, that even in those churches *where the* greater part of the members were not true saints, as in those degenerate churches of Sardis and Laodicea, which we may suppose were become very lax in their admissions and discipline; yet *they looked upon themselves* as truly gracious persons, and had with others the *reputation* of such.

(6.) If we should suppose, that by reason of the extraordinary state of things in that day, the apostles had reason *to think* the greater part of the members of churches to be true Christians, yet unless profession and appearance of true Christianity was their proper qualification, and the ground of their admission, and unless it was supposed that all of them esteemed themselves true Christians, it is altogether unaccountable that the apostles in their epistles to them never make any express particular *distinction* between those different sorts of members. If the churches were made up of persons who the apostles knew looked on themselves in so exceeding different a state, some the children of God, and others the children of the devil, some the high favorites of heaven and heirs of eternal glory, others the children of wrath, being under condemnation to eternal death, and every moment in danger of dropping into hell: I say, if this was the case, why do the apostles make no *distinction* in what they say to them or of

them, in their manner of addressing them, in the things they set before them, and in the counsels, reproofs and warnings they gave them? Why do the apostles in their epistles never apply themselves or direct their speech to the *unconverted* members of the churches, in particular, in a manner tending to awaken them, and make them sensible of the miserable condition they were in, and press them to seek the converting grace of God? It is to be considered, that the Apostle Paul was very particularly acquainted with the circumstances of most of those churches he wrote to; for he had been among them, was their spiritual father, had been the instrument of gathering and founding those churches, and they had received all their instructions and directions relating to Christianity and their soul concerns from him; nor can it be questioned but that many of them had opened the case of their souls to him. And if he was sensible, that there was a number among them that made no pretensions to being in a regenerate state, and that he and others had no reason to judge them to be in such a state, he knew that the sin of such who lived in the rejection of a Saviour, even in the very house of God, in the midst of gospel light, and in violation of the most sacred vows, was peculiarly aggravated, and their guilt and state peculiarly dreadful. Why should he therefore never particularly and distinctly point his addresses to such, applying himself to them in much compassion to their souls, and putting them in mind of their awful circumstances? But instead of this, continually lumping all together, and indifferently addressing the whole body, as if they were all in happy circumstances, expressing his charity for them all, and congratulating them all in their glorious and eternal privileges; and instead of speaking to them in such a manner as should have a tendency to alarm them with a sense of danger, on the contrary, calling on all without distinction, from time to time, to rejoice? Philip. iii. 1. "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." So, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. "Finally, brethren, be of good comfort." Philip. iv. 4. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice." The matter is insisted upon, as though rejoicing were a duty especially proper for them, and what they had the highest reason for. The apostle not only

did not preach terror to those whom he wrote to, but is careful to guard them against fears of God's wrath; as in 1 Thess. v. at the beginning, when the apostle there observes how that Christ will come on ungodly men "as a thief in the night; and when they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape;" he immediately uses caution, that the members of the church of Thessalonica should not take this to themselves, and be terrified, as though they were in danger; and says, in the next words, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief; ye are ALL the children of light, and the children of the day." And says, in the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ; who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. *Wherefore* comfort yourselves together, and edify one another; even as also ye do." And ver. 16, he says, "Rejoice evermore." How diverse is this way of treating churches, from the method in which faithful ministers are wont to deal with their congregations, wherein are many that make no pretence to true piety, and from the way in which Mr Stoddard was wont to deal with his congregation. And how would he have undoubtedly judged such a way of treating them the most direct course in the world eternally to undo them? And shall we determine that the Apostle Paul was one of those prophets, who *daubed with untempered mortar, and sewed pillowes under all arm holes, and healed the hurt* of immortal souls *slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace.* These things make it most evident, that the primitive churches were not constituted as those modern churches, where persons knowing and owning themselves *unregenerate*, are admitted, on principle.

If it be here objected, that the apostle sometimes exhorts these that he writes to, to *put off the old man*, and *put on the new man*, and to *be renewed in the spirit of their minds*, &c. as exhorting them to seek conversion: I answer, that the meaning is manifestly but this, That they should mortify the

*remains* of corruption, or the old man, and turn more and more from sin to God. Thus he exhorts the Ephesians to be *renewed*, &c. Eph. iv. 22, 23, whom yet he had before in the same epistle abundantly represented as savingly renewed already; as has been before observed. And the like might be shewn of other instances.

(7.) It is a clear evidence, not only that it happened and the greater part of the members of the primitive churches were to appearance true Christians; but that they were taken in *under that notion*, and because there appeared in them grounds of such an *estimation* of them; and when any happened to be admitted that were otherwise, it was *beside their aim*; in as much as when others were admitted, they are represented as *brought* or *crept in unawares*. Thus the matter is represented by the apostles. Jude, verse 4. "There are certain men crept in unawares....ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." Gal. ii. 4. "False brethren, unawares brought in." If it be said, These here spoken of were openly scandalous persons and heretics: I answer, they were not openly scandalous when they were brought in; nor is there any reason to think they were heretics when admitted, though afterwards they turned apostates. Mr. Stoddard says, it does not follow that *all* hypocrites crept in unawares because some did. (*Appeal*, p. 17.) To which I would humbly say, it must be certainly true with respect to all hypocrites who were admitted, either that the church which admitted them was *aware* they were such, or else was not. If there were some of whom the church was *aware* that they were hypocrites, at the time when they were taken in, then the church, in admitting them, did not follow the *rule* that Mr. Stoddard often declares himself to suppose ought to be followed in admitting members, viz. to admit none but what *in a judgment of rational charity are true Christians*.... (*Appeal*, p. 2, 3, 10, 28, 33, 67, 73, 93, 94.) But that not only heretics and designing dissemblers *crept in unawares*, but that all *false brethren*, all church members not truly gracious did so, appears by such being represented as *bastards* in a family, who are false children and false heirs, brought into it

*unawares*, and imposed upon the disposers of those privileges *by stealth*. Heb. xii. 8. "If ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye *bastards*, and not sons."

Thus it is abundantly manifest, from the apostolical writings, how the visible church of Christ, through the whole world, was at first constituted and ordered, under the direction of the apostles themselves, who regulated it according to the infallible guidance of the Spirit of their great Lord and Master. And doubtless, as the Christian church was constituted *then*, so it ought to be constituted *now*. What better rule have we for our ecclesiastical regulations in other respects, than what was done in the primitive churches, under the apostles' own direction; as particularly the standing officers of the church, presbyters and deacons, the method of introducing ministers in their ordination, &c. In this matter that I have insisted on, I think the Scripture is abundantly more full than in those other things.

IX. Another evidence, that such as are taken into the church, ought to be in the eye of a Christian judgment truly *gracious* or *pious* persons, is this, that the Scripture represents the *visible church* of Christ as a society having its several members united by the bond of *Christian brotherly love*.

Besides that general benevolence or charity which the saints have to mankind, and which they exercise towards both the evil and the good in common, there is a peculiar and very *distinguishing* kind of affection, that every true Christian experiences towards those whom he looks upon as truly gracious persons; whereby the soul, at least at times, is very sensibly and sweetly knit to such persons, and there is an effable *oneness* of *heart* with them; whereby, to use the Scripture phrase (Acts iv. 32.) "They are of one heart and one soul:" Which holy affection is exercised towards others on account of the spiritual image of God in them, their supposed relation to God as his children, and to Christ as his members, and to them as their spiritual brethren in Christ. This sacred affection is a very good and distinguishing note of true grace, much spoken of as such in Scripture, under the name of φιλαδελφια, *the love of the brethren*, or *brotherly love*;

and is called by Christ, *The receiving a righteous man in the name of a righteous man; and receiving one of Christ's little ones in the name of a disciple*, or *because he belongs to Christ* (Matth. x. 41, 42. Mark ix. 41.) and a *loving one another as Christ has loved them* (John xiii. 34, and xv. 13, 14, 15.) Having a peculiar image of that *oneness* which is between Christ himself and his saints. Compare John xvii. 20, to the end.

This *love* the apostles are often directing Christians to exercise towards fellow members of the visible church; as in Rom. xii. 10. "Be ye kindly affectioned one to another with *brotherly* love." The words are much more emphatical in the original, and do more lively represent that peculiar *endearment* that there is between *gracious* persons, or those that look on one another as such; τη φιλαδελφια εις αλληλους φιλοστοργοι. The expressions properly signify, *cleaving one to another with brotherly, natural, strong endearment.* With the like emphasis and energy does the Apostle Peter express himself, 1 Epist. i. 22. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren (εις φιλαδελφιαν ανυποκριτον.) "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Again, chap. iii. 8, Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." The words in the Greek are much more significant, elegant, and forcible; παντες ομοφρονες, συμπαθεις, φιλαδελφοι, ευσπλαγχνοι, φιλοφρονες. The same peculiar endearment the apostle has doubtless respect to in chap. iv. "Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves." The Apostle Paul in his Epistles, from time to time, speaks of the visible saints whom he writes to, as being united one to another with this affection, and considers it as a note of their piety. Col. i. 4. "We heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all saints." 1 Thess. iv. 9. "As touching BROTHERLY LOVE, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." So Philem. 5. "Hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and towards all saints." And this is what he exhorts to, Heb.

xiii. 1. "Let BROTHERLY LOVE continue." 1 Thess. v. 26. "Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." Compare 1 Cor. xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 12, and 1 Pet. v. 14.

This φιλαδελφια, or *love to the brethren*, is that virtue which the Apostle John so much insists on in his first Epistle, as one of the most distinguishing characteristics of true grace, and a peculiar evidence that *God dwelleth in us*, and *we in God*. By which must needs be understood a love to saints *as* saints, or on account of the spiritual image of God supposed to be in them, and their spiritual relation to God; according as it has always been understood by orthodox divines. No reasonable doubt can be made, but that the Apostle John in this Epistle, has respect to the same sort of love, which Christ prescribed to his disciples, in that which he called by way of eminency HIS COMMANDMENT, and *his* NEW COMMANDMENT, which he gave as a great of *mark* their being truly his *disciples* as this same apostle gives an account in his gospel; and to which he plainly refers, when speaking of *the love of the brethren* in his epistle, chap. ii. 7, 8, and iii. 23. But that *love*, which Christ speaks of in his *new commandment*, is spoken of as between those that CHRIST *loves*, or is supposed *to love*; and which has *his love* to them for its ground and pattern. And if this φιλαδελφια, this *love of the brethren*, so much spoken of by Christ, and by the Apostles Paul and John, be not that *peculiar* affection which gracious persons or true saints have one to another, which is so great a part, and so remarkable an exercise of true grace, *where* is it spoken of, at all, in the New Testament?

We see how often the apostles exhort visible Christians to exercise this affection to all other members of the visible church of Christ, and how often they speak of the members of the visible church, as actually thus *united* in places already mentioned. In 2 Cor. ix. 14, the apostle speaks of the members of *other* churches *loving* the members of the church of Corinth, with this peculiar endearment and oneness of heart, for *the grace of God in them*; "And by their prayer for you, which long after you, for the exceeding grace of God in you." The word translated *long after*, is επιποθουντων; which properly sig-

nifies to love with an *exceeding* and *dear* love. And this is represented as the *bond*, that unites all the members of the visible church: Acts iv. 32. "And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and one soul." This is the same thing which elsewhere is called being of *one mind*: 1 Pet. iii. 8. "Finally, be ye all of one mind." And being of *the same mind*: 1 Cor. i. 10. "That ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind." And being of *the same mind*: Philip. iv. 2. "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be OF THE SAME MIND in the Lord." And being *like minded* (the word is the same in the Greek) Rom. xv. 5, 6. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be LIKE MINDED one towards another; that ye may with *one mind*, and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." There is reason to think, that it is this *oneness of mind*, or being *of one heart and soul*, is meant by that *charity* which the apostle calls the *bond of perfectness*, Col. iii. 14: And represents as the bond of union between all the *members* of the *body*, in Eph. iv. 15, 16. "But speaking the truth in LOVE, may grow up into him in all things which is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body FITLY JOINED TOGETHER, AND COMPACTED by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in LOVE."

Herein seems much to consist the nature of *scandal* in the members of a church, viz. such an offence as is a wound and interruption to this kind of *affection*, being a stumbling block to a Christian judgment, in regard of its esteem of the offender as a *real Christian*, and what much lessens the visibility of his Christian character. And therefore when scandal is removed by visible *repentance*, the church is directed to *confirm their love* to the offender, 2 Cor. ii. 8.

Now this intimate affection towards others as *brethren in Christ* and *fellow members* of him, must have some apprehension of the understanding, some judgment of the mind, for its foundation. To say, that we must thus *love* others as visible members of Christ, if any thing *else* be meant, than that we

must love them because they are visibly, or *as* they appear to our judgment, real members of Christ, is in effect to say, that we must thus love them without any foundation at all. In order to a real and fervent affection to another, on account of some amiableness of qualification or relation, the mind must first judge there is that amiableness in the object. The affections of the mind are not so at command that we can make them strongly to go forth to an object *as* having such loveliness, when at the same time we do not positively *judge* any such thing concerning them, but only *hope* it may be so, because we see no sufficient reason to determine the contrary. There must be a *positive* dictate of the understanding, and some degree of satisfaction of the judgment, to be a ground of that *oneness of heart and soul*, which is agreeable to Scripture representations of φιλαδελφια, or *brotherly love*. And a supposition only of that *moral sincerity and virtue*, or *common grace*, which some insist upon, though it may be a sufficient ground of *neighborly* and *civil* affection, cannot be a sufficient ground of this intimate affection to them as *brethren* in the family of a heavenly Father, this fervent love to them *in the bowels of Jesus Christ*; that implying nothing in it inconsistent with being *gospel sinners* and domestic *enemies* in the house of God; which Christians know are the most hateful enemies to Christ, of all the enemies that he has.

It is a thing well agreeing with the wisdom of Christ, and that peculiar favor he has manifested to his saints, and with his dealings with them in many other respects, to suppose, he has made a provision in his institutions, that they might have the comfort of uniting, with such as their hearts are united with in that holy intimate affection which has been spoken of, in some special religious exercises and duties of worship, and visible intercourse with their Redeemer, joining with those concerning whom they can have some satisfaction of mind, that they are cordially united with them in adoring and expressing their *love* to their common Lord and Saviour, that they may *with one mind, with one heart, and one soul*, as well as *with one mouth, glorify him*; as in the forementioned Rom. xv. 5, 6, compared with Acts iv. 32. This seems to be

what this heavenly affection naturally inclines to. And how eminently fit and proper for this purpose is the sacrament of the *Lord's supper*, the Christian church's great feast of *love*; wherein Christ's people sit together as *brethren* in the family of God, at their Father's table, to feast on the love of their Redeemer, commemorating his sufferings for them, and his dying love to them, and sealing *their* love to him and one another?....It is hardly credible, that Christ has so ordered things as that there are no instituted social acts of worship, wherein *his saints* are to manifest their respect to him, but such as wherein they ordinarily are obliged *(if the rule for admissions be carefully attended)* to join with a society of fellow worshippers, concerning whom they have no reason to think but that the *greater part* of them are *unconverted* (and are more provoking enemies to that Lord they love and adore, than most of the very Heathen) which Mr. Stoddard supposes to be the case with the members of the visible church. *Appeal*, p. 16.

X. It is necessary that those who partake of the *Lord's supper*, should *judge themselves* truly and cordially to *accept* CHRIST, as their only Saviour and chief good; for this is what the *actions*, which communicants perform at the Lord's table, are a solemn *profession* of.

There is in the Lord's supper a mutual solemn *profession* of the two parties transacting the covenant of grace, and visibly united in that covenant; the Lord Christ by his minister, on the one hand, and the communicants (who are professing believers) on the other. The administrator of the ordinance acts in the quality of Christ's minister, acts in his name, as representing him; and stands in the place where Christ himself stood at the first administration of this sacrament, and in the original institution of the ordinance. Christ, by the speeches and actions of the minister, makes a solemn profession of his part in the covenant of grace: He exhibits the sacrifice of his body broken and his blood shed; and in the minister's offering the sacramental bread and wine to the communicants, Christ presents himself to the believing communicants, as their propitiation and bread of life; and by these

outward signs confirms and seals his sincere engagements to be their Saviour and food, and to impart to them all the benefits of his propitiation and salvation. And they, in receiving what is offered, and eating and drinking the symbols of Christ's body and blood, also profess their part in the covenant of grace: They profess to embrace the promises and lay hold of the hope set before them, to receive the atonement, to receive Christ as their spiritual food, and to feed upon him in their hearts by faith. Indeed what is professed on both sides is the *heart*: For Christ in offering himself, professes the willingness of *his heart* to be theirs who truly receive him, and the communicants on their part, profess the willingness of *their hearts* to receive him, which they declare by significant actions. They profess to take Christ as their spiritual food, and bread of life. To accept Christ as our *bread of life*, is to accept him *as our Saviour and portion*; as food is both the means of preserving life, and is also the refreshment and comfort of life. The signification of the word *manna*, that great type of this bread of life, is a *portion*. That which God offers to us as our food, he offers as our portion; and that which we accept as our food, we accept as our portion. Thus the Lord's supper is plainly a *mutual* renovation, confirmation, and seal of the covenant of grace. Both the covenanting parties *profess* their consent to their respective parts in the covenant, and each affixes his *seal* to his profession. And there is in this ordinance the very same thing acted over in profession and sensible signs, which is spiritually transacted between Christ and his spouse in the covenant that unites them. Here we have from time to time the glorious *bridegroom* exhibiting himself with his great love that is stronger than death, appearing clothed in robes of grace, and engaging himself with all his glory and love, and its infinite benefits, to be theirs who receive him; And here we have his *spouse* accepting this bridegroom, choosing him for her friend, her only Saviour and portion, and relying on him for all his benefits. And thus the covenant transaction of this spiritual marriage is confirmed and sealed, from time to time. The *actions* of the communicants at the Lord's ta-

have as expressive and significant a language, as the most solemn words. When a person in this ordinance *takes* and *eats* and *drinks* those things which represent Christ, the plain meaning and implicit profession of these his actions, is this, "I take this crucified Jesus as my Saviour, my sweetest food, my chief portion, and the life of my soul, consenting to acquiesce in him as such, and to hunger and thirst after him only, renouncing all other saviours, and all other portions for his sake." The actions, *thus interpreted*, are a proper renovation and ratification of the covenant of grace; and no otherwise. And those that take, and eat and drink the sacramental elements at the Lord's table with any *other* meaning, I fear, *know not what they do.*

The *actions* at the Lord's supper, thus implying in their nature and signification, a renewing and confirming of the covenant, there is a declarative explicit covenanting supposed to *precede* it; which is the *profession* of religion, before spoken of, that qualifies a person for admission to the Lord's supper. And there doubtless is, or ought to be, as much explicitly professed in *words*, as is implicitly professed in these *actions*; for by these significant actions, the communicant sets his seal but to his profession. The established signs in the Lord's supper are fully equivalent to words; they are a renewing and reiterating the same thing which was done *before*; only with this difference, that now it is done by *speaking signs*, whereas before it was by *speaking sounds*. Our taking the bread and wine is as much a *professing* to accept of Christ, at least, as a woman's taking a *ring* of the bridegroom in her marriage is a profession and seal of her taking him for her husband. The sacramental elements in the Lord's supper do represent Christ as a party in covenant, as truly as a *proxy* represents a prince to a foreign lady in her marriage; and our taking those elements is as truly a professing to accept Christ, as in the other case the lady's taking the proxy is her professing to accept the prince as her husband. Or the matter may more fitly be represented by this similitude: It is as if a prince should send an ambassador to a woman in a foreign land, proposing marriage, and by his ambassador

should send her his *picture*, and should desire her to manifest her acceptance of his suit, not only by professing her acceptance in words to his ambassador, but in token of her sincerity openly to take or accept that picture, and so to make her profession, by thus representing the matter over again by a symbolical action.

To suppose, persons ought thus solemnly to profess that which at the same time they do not at all imagine they experience in themselves, and do not really pretend to, is a very great absurdity. For a man sacramentally to make such a *profession of religion*, proceeding avowedly on the foot of such *doctrine*, is to profess that which he *does not* profess; his actions being no established signs of the thing supposed to be professed, nor carrying in them the least profession to it. And therefore doing thus can be no man's duty; unless it be men's duty to make a solemn profession of that which in truth they make *no* profession of. The Lord's supper is most evidently a *professing* ordinance; and the communicants' profession must be such as is adjusted to the nature and design of the ordinance; which nothing short of *faith in the blood of Christ* will answer, even *faith unfeigned*, which worketh by *love*. A profession therefore exclusive of this, is essentially defective, and quite unsuitable to the character of a *communicant*.

XI. When the apostle says, 1 Cor. xi. 28. "Let a man examine himself and so let him eat," it seems to be much the most reasonable to understand it of *trying himself* with regard to the *truth* of his *Christianity*, or reality of his grace; the same which the same apostle directs the same Corinthians to in his other epistle, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, where the same word is used in the original. The Greek word (δοκιμαζετω) will not admit of what some have supposed to be the apostle's meaning, viz. that a man should consider and inquire into his circumstances, and the necessities of his case, that he may know what are the wants he should go to the Lord's table for a supply of. The word properly signifies *proving* or *trying* a thing with respect to its *quality* and *goodness*, or in order to determine whether it be *true* and *of the right sort*. And so the word is always used in the New Testament; unless that sometimes it is used

as it were metonymically, and in such places is variously translated, either *discerning*, or *allowing*, *approving*, *liking*, &c. these being the effects of *trial*. Nor is the word used more frequently in the New Testament for any sort of trial whatever, than for the trial of professors with regard to their *grace* or *piety*. The word (as Dr. Ames in his Catechesecos Sciagraphia, and Mr. Willard in his Body of Divinity, observe) is borrowed from goldsmiths, properly signifying the *trial* they make of their silver and gold, whether it be *genuine* or *counterfeit*: And with a manifest allusion to this original application of the word, is often used in the New Testament for a *trying* the piety of professors. It is used with this view in all the following texts: 1 Pet. i. 7. "That the TRIAL of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be TRIED by fire, might be found unto praise," &c. 1 Cor. iii. 13. "The fire shall TRY every man's work of what sort it is." James i. 3. "The TRYING of your faith worketh patience." 1 Thess. ii. 4. "God who TRIETH our hearts." The same word is used in 2 Cor. viii. 8. "To PROVE the sincerity of your love." So, Gal. vi. 3, 4. "If any man thinketh himself, to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself: But let every man PROVE his own work." In all these places there is the same word in the Greek with that in the text now under consideration.

When the apostle directs professing Christians to *try themselves*, using this word indefinitely, as properly signifying the examining or proving a thing whether it be *genuine* or *counterfeit*, the most natural construction of his advice is, that they should *try themselves* with respect to their spiritual state and religious profession, whether they are *disciples indeed*, real and genuine Christians, or whether they are not false and hypocritical professors. As if a man should bring a piece of metal that had the color of gold, with the impress of the king's coin, to a goldsmith, and desire him to *try* that money, without adding any words to limit his meaning, would not the goldsmith naturally understand, that he was to try whether it was true gold, or true money, yea or no?

But here it is said by some, that the *context* of the passage under debate (1 Cor. xi. 28,) does plainly *limit* the meaning of the word in that place; the apostle there speaking of those things that had appeared among the communicants at Corinth, which were of a *scandalous* nature, so doubtless unfitting them for the Lord's supper; and therefore when the apostle directs them to *examine* or prove themselves, it is but just, to suppose his meaning to be, that they should try whether they be not disqualified by *scandal*. To this I answer, though the apostle's putting the Corinthians upon trying themselves, was on *occasion* of the mentioning some scandalous practices found among them, yet this is by no means any argument of its being only his meaning, that they should try *themselves* whether they were *scandalous* persons; and not that they should try whether they were *true, genuine Christians*. The very nature of *scandal* (as was observed before) is that which tends to obscure the visibility of the piety of professors, and wound others' charity towards them, by bringing the reality of their grace into doubt; and therefore what could be more natural, than for the Apostle, when mentioning such scandals among the Corinthians, to put them upon trying the state of their souls, and proving their sincerity? This is certainly the case in this apostle's directing the same persons to *prove themselves*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, using the same word there, which he uses here, and giving his direction on the like occasion. For in the second epistle (as well as in the first) his putting them on *examining* and *proving themselves*, was on occasion of his mentioning some *scandals* found among them; as is plain from the foregoing context. And yet there it is expressly said, That the thing concerning which he directs them to *prove* themselves, is, whether they be *in the faith*, and whether *Christ is in them*. Nor is there any thing more in the preceding context of one place, than in that of the other, obliging or leading us to understand the apostle to intend only a trying whether they were *scandalous*, and not whether they were sincere Christians.

And as to the words following in the next verse: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judg-

ment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body:" These words by no means make it evident, (as some hold) that what the apostle would have them examine themselves about, is whether they have *doctrinal knowledge*, sufficient to understand, that the bread and wine in the sacrament signify the body and blood of Christ: But on the contrary, to interpret the apostle in this sense only, is unreasonable upon several accounts. (1.) None can so much as go about such an *examination*, without first knowing, that the Lord's body and blood *is signified* by these elements. For merely a man's putting this question to himself, *Do I understand that this bread and this wine signify the body and blood of Christ?* Supposes him already to know it from previous information; and therefore to exhort persons to go about such an examination, would be absurd. And then (2.) it is incredible, that there should be any such *gross ignorance* appearing in a number of the communicants in the Corinthian church, if we consider what the scripture informs us concerning that church: As particularly, if we consider what an able and thorough instructor and spiritual father they had had, even the Apostle Paul, who founded that church, brought them out of their Heathenish darkness, and initiated them in the Christian religion, and had instructed them in the nature and ends of gospel ordinances; and continued at Corinth, constantly laboring in word and doctrine for a long while together, no less than *a year and six months*; and, as we may well suppose, administering the Lord's supper among them every Lord's day; for the apostle speaks of it as the manner of that church, to communicate at the Lord's table with such frequency, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. And the Corinthian church, at that day, when the apostle wrote this epistle, was a church noted for excelling in *doctrinal knowledge*; as is evident by chap. i. 5, 6, 7, and several other passages in the epistle. Besides the communicants were expressly told at every communion, every week, when the bread and wine were delivered to them in the administration, that that bread signified the body, and that wine signified the blood of Christ. And then besides (3.) the apostle by his argument chap. x. 16, supposes the Corinthians doctrinally ac-

quainted with this subject already. It therefore appears to me much more reasonable, to apprehend the case to be thus: The offensive behavior of the communicants at Corinth gave the apostle reason to suspect, that some of them came to the Lord's table without a proper impression and true sense of the great and glorious things there signified; having no habitual hunger or relish for the spiritual food there represented, no inward, vital and experimental taste for that *flesh of the Son of Man*, which is *meat indeed*. The word translated *discerning*, signifies to *discriminate* or *distinguish*. The *taste* is the proper sense whereby to discern or distinguish food, Job. xxxiv. 3. And it is a spiritual *sense* or *taste* which is that whereby we discern or distinguish spiritual food. Heb. v. 14. "Those who by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil;" προς διακρισιν, &c. A word of the same root with that rendered *discerning*, in 1 Cor. xi. 29. He that has no habitual appetite to and relish of that spiritual food, which is represented and offered at the Lord's table; he that has no spiritual taste, wherewith to perceive any thing more at the Lord's supper, than in common food; or that has no higher view, than with a little seeming devotion to eat bread, as it were in the way of an ordinance, but without regarding in his heart the spiritual meaning and end of it, and without being suitably affected with the dying love of Christ therein commemorated; such a one may most truly and properly be said *not to discern the Lord's body*. When therefore the apostle exhorts to *selfexamination* as a preparative for the sacramental supper, he may well be understood to put professors upon inquiring whether they have such a principle of *faith*, by means whereof they are habitually in a capacity and disposition of mind to *discern the Lord's body* practically and spiritually (as well as speculatively and notionally) in their communicating at the Lord's table: Which is what none can do who have but common grace, or a faith short of that which is justifying and saving. It is only a living faith that capacitates men to *discern the Lord's body* in the sacrament with that spiritual sensation or spiritual gust, which is suitable to the nature and design of the ordinance, and which the apostle seems principally to intend.

## PART THIRD.

### *Objections Answered.*

OBJECTION I.

THE scripture calls the members of the visible church by the name of *disciples*, *scholars*, or *learners*; and that suggests to us this notion of the visible church, that it is the *school* of Christ, into which persons are admitted in order to their *learning of Christ*, and coming to spiritual attainments, in the use of the means of teaching, discipline, and training up, established in the school. Now if this be a right notion of the visible church, then reason shews that no other qualifications are necessary in order to a being members of this *school*, then such a *faith* and *disposition of mind* as are requisite to persons putting themselves under Christ as their *Master* and *Teacher*, and subjecting themselves to the *orders* of the school. But a *common faith* and *moral sincerity* are sufficient for this. Therefore the scripture leads us to suppose the visible church to be *properly constituted* of those who have these qualifications, though they have not *saving faith* and *true piety*.

ANSWER. I own, the scripture calls the members of the visible church by the name of *disciples*. But I deny it *therefore* follows that the church which they are members of, is duly and properly constituted of those who have not true piety. Because if this consequence was good, then it would equally follow, that not only the *visible*, but also the *invisible* or *mystical* church is properly constituted of those who have not unfeigned faith and true piety. For the members of the mystical church, *as such*, and to denote the special character of such, are called *disciples*; in Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33, and in John viii. 31, and xiii. 35, and xv. 8. This shews, that in the argument I am answering, there is no connexion between the premises and the conclusion. For the force of the objection consists in this, that the members of the visible church are

called *disciples* in scripture: This is the sum total of the premises: And if there be any connexion between the premises and the conclusion, it must lie in the truth of this proposition; *The church, whose members are called by the name of* disciples, *as signifying their state and quality as members of that society, that church is properly and fitly constituted, not only of persons truly pious, but of others that have merely a common faith and virtue.* But this proposition, we have seen, is not true; and so there is no connexion between the former and latter part of it, which are the same with the premises and conclusion of this argument.

2. Though I do not deny, that the visible church of Christ may fitly be represented as a school of Christ, where persons are trained up in the use of means, in order to *some* spiritual attainments: Yet it will not hence necessarily follow, that this is in order to *all* good attainments; for it will not follow but that certain good attainments may be *prerequisite*, in order to a *place* in the school. The church of Christ is a school appointed for the training up Christ's *little children*, to greater degrees of knowledge, higher privileges, and greater serviceableness in this world, and more of a meetness for the possession of their eternal inheritance. But there is no necessity of supposing that it is in order to fit them to become Christ's children, or to be introduced into his family; any more than there is a necessity of supposing, because a prince puts his children under tutors, that therefore it must be in order to their attaining to be of the royal family. If it be necessary, that there should be a church of Christ appointed as a school of instruction and discipline, to bring persons to *all* good attainments whatsoever, then it will follow, that there must be a visible church constituted of *scandalous* and *profane* persons and *heretics*, and all in common that assume the Christian name, that so means may be used with them in order to bring them to *moral sincerity*, and an acknowledgment of the Christian faith.

3. I grant, that no other qualifications are necessary in order to bring members of that school of Christ which is his visible church, than such as are requisite in order to *their subject*

*ing themselves to Christ as their Master and Teacher*, and *subjecting themselves to the laws and orders of his school:* Nevertheless I deny that a *common faith*, and *moral sincerity* are sufficient for this; because none do truly subject themselves to Christ *as their Master*, but such as, having their hearts *purified by faith*, are delivered from the reigning power of sin: For we cannot subject ourselves to obey *two* contrary *masters* at the same time. None do submit to Christ as their *Teacher*, but those who truly receive him as their Prophet, to teach them by his word and Spirit; giving up themselves to his teachings, *sitting* with *Mary*, as little children, at *Jesus' feet to hear his word;* and hearkening more to his dictates, than those of their blind and deceitful lusts, and relying on his wisdom more than their own. The Scripture knows nothing of an ecclesiastical school constituted of *enemies of the cross of Christ*, and appointed to bring such to be reconciled to him and submit to him as their Master. Neither have they who are not truly pious persons, any true difposition of heart to submit to the *laws* and *orders* of Christ's school, the rules which his word prescribes to all his scholars; such as, to *love their Master* supremely; *to love one another as brethren;* and *to love their book*, i. e. their Bible, more than vain trifles and amusements, yea above gold and silver; *to be faithful to the interest of the Master, and of the school; to depend on his teachings;* to *cry to him for knowledge; above all their gettings, to get understanding*, &c.

4. Whatever ways of constituting the church may to us seem fit, proper, and reasonable, the *question* is, not what constitution of Christ's church seems convenient to *human* wisdom, but what constitution is actually established by Christ's infinite wisdom. Doubtless, if men should set their wits to work, and proceed according to what seems good in their sight, they would greatly alter Christ's constitution of his church, to make it more convenient and beautiful, and would adorn it with a vast variety of ingenious inventions; as the church of Rome has done. The question is, whether this *school* of Christ, which they talk of, made up very much of those who pretend to no experiences or attainments but what

consist with their being *enemies* of Christ in their hearts, and who in reality love the vilest lust better than him, be that church of Christ which in the New Testament is denominated *his city, his temple, his family, his body*, &c. by which names the visible church of Christ is there frequently called.

I acknowledge, that *means*, of Christ's appointment, are to be used with those who are Christ's enemies, and do not profess themselves any other, to change their *hearts*, and bring them to be Christ's *friends* and *disciples*. Such means are to be used with all sorts of persons, with Jews, Mahometans, Heathens, with nominal Christians that are heretical or vicious, the profane, the intemperate, the unclean, and all other enemies of Christ; and these means to be used constantly, and laboriously. Scandalous persons need to go to *school*, to learn to be Christians, as much as other men. And there are many persons that are not *morally sincere*, who, from selfish and sinister views, do consent ordinarily to go to church, and so be in the way of the use of means. And none ought to forbid them thus going to Christ's *school*, that they may be taught by him in the ministry of the gospel. But yet it will not follow, that such a *school* is the *church* of CHRIST. Human laws can put persons, even those who are very vicious, into the *school* of Christ, in that sense; they can oblige them constantly to be present at public teaching, and attend on the means of grace appointed by Christ, and dispensed in his name: But human laws cannot join men to the *church* of Christ, and make them members of his body.

## OBJECTION II.

VISIBLE *saintship* in the Scripture sense cannot be the same with that which has been supposed and insisted on, viz. a being in the eye of a rational charity truly pious; because Israel of old were from time to time called *God's people*, when it is certain the greater part of them were far from having any *such* visible holiness as this. Thus the *ten tribes* were called God's people, Hosea iv. 6, after they had revolted from

the true worship of God, and had obstinately continued in their idolatrous worship at Bethel and Dan for about two hundred and fifty years, and were at that time, a little before their captivity especially, in the height of their wickedness. So the Jews are called *God's people*, in Ezek. xxxvi. 20, and other places, at the time of their captivity in Babylon; a time when most of them were abandoned to all kinds of the most horrid and open impieties, as the prophets frequently represent. Now it is certain that the people at that time were not called *God's people*, because of any visibility of true piety to the eye of reason or of a rational charity, because most of them were grossly wicked, and declared their sin as Sodom. And in the same manner wherein the Jews of old were God's people, are the members of the visible Christian Gentile church God's people; for they are spoken of as *grafted into the same olive tree*, from whence the former were *broken off by unbelief*.

Answer. The argument proves too much, and therefore nothing at all. If those whom I oppose in this controversy, bring this objection, they will in effect as much oppose themselves in it as me. The objection, if it have any force, equally militates against their and my notion of visible saintship. For those Jews which it is alleged were called God's people, and yet were so notoriously, openly, and obstinately wicked, had neither any visibility of true piety, nor yet of that moral sincerity in the profession and duties of the true religion, which the opponents themselves suppose to be requisite in order to a proper visible holiness, and a due admission to the privileges and ordinances of the church of God. None will pretend that these obstinate idolaters and impious wretches had those qualifications which are now requisite in order to an admission to the Christian sacraments. And therefore to what purpose can they bring this objection? Which, if it proves any thing, overthrows my scheme and their own both together, and both in an equally effectual manner; and not only so, but will thoroughly destroy the schemes of all *Protestants* through the world, concerning the qualifications of the subjects of Christian ordinances. And therefore the support of what I have laid down against those whom I oppose in this

controversy, requires no further answer to this objection. Nevertheless for the greater satisfaction, I would here observe further:

That such appellations as God's *people*, God's *Israel*, and some other like phrases, are used and applied in Scripture with considerable *diversity* of intention. Thus, we have a plain distinction between the *house of Israel*, and the *house of Israel*, in Ezek. xx. 38, 39, 40. By the house of *Israel*, in the 39th verse, is meant literally the nation or family of *Israel*: But by the house of *Israel* in the 40th verse, seems to be intended the *spiritual house*, the body of God's visible saints, that should attend the ordinances of his public worship in gospel times. So likewise there is a distinction made between the *house of Israel*, and *God's disciples*, who should profess and visibly adhere *to his law and testimony*, in Isa. viii. 14....17. And though the whole nation of the Jews are often called *God's people* in those degenerate times wherein the prophets were sent to reprove them, yet at the same time they are charged as *falsely calling themselves of the holy city*. Isa. xlviii. 2. And God often tells them, they are rather to be reckoned among aliens, and to be looked upon as children of the Ethiopians, or posterity of the ancient Canaanites, on account of their grossly wicked and scandalous behavior. See Amos ix. 7, 8, &c. Ezek. xvi. 2, 3, &c. verses 45, 46, &c. Isa. i. 10.

It is evident that God sometimes, according to the methods of his marvellous mercy, and long suffering towards mankind, has a merciful respect to a degenerate church, that is become exceeding corrupt in regard that it is constituted of members who have not those qualifications which ought to be insisted on: God continues still to have respect to them so far as not utterly to forsake them, or wholly to deny his confirmation of, and blessing on their administrations. And not being utterly renounced of God, their administrations are to be looked upon as in some respect valid, and the society as in some sort a people or church of God: Which was the case with the church of Rome, at least till the Reformation and Council of Trent; for till then we must own their bap-

tisms and ordinations to be valid....The church that the pope sits in, is called, *The Temple of God.* 2. Thess. ii. 4.

And with regard to the people of Israel, it is very manifest, that something diverse is oftentimes intended by that nation's being *God's people*, from their being visible saints, or visibly holy, or having those qualifications which are requisite in order to a due admission to the ecclesiastical privileges of such. That *nation*, that *family of Israel, according to the flesh*, and *with regard to that external and carnal qualification*, were in some sense adopted by God to be his *peculiar people*, and his *covenant people*. This is not only evident by what has been already observed, but also indisputably manifest from Rom. ix. 3, 4, 5. "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the ADOPTION, and the glory and the COVENANTS, and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the PROMISES; whose are the fathers; and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came." It is to be noted, that the privileges here mentioned are spoken of as belonging to the Jews, not now as visible saints, not as professors of the true religion, not as members of the visible church of Christ; but only as people of *such a nation*, such a blood, such an external and carnal relation to the patriarchs, their ancestors, *Israelites* ACCORDING TO THE FLESH. For the apostle is speaking here of the *unbelieving Jews*, professed unbelievers, that were out of the Christian church, and open visible enemies to it, and such as had no right to the external privileges of Christ's people. So, in Rom. xi. 28, 29, this apostle speaks of the same *unbelieving Jews*, as in some respect an *elect people*, and interested in the *calling*, *promises*, and *covenants* God formerly gave to their forefathers, and as still *beloved* for their sakes. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." These things are in these places spoken of, not as privileges belonging to the Jews now as a people of the right

religion, or in the true church of visible worshippers of God; but as a people of such a pedigree or blood; and that even after the ceasing of the Mosaic administration. But these were privileges more especially belonging to them under the Old Testament: They were a *family* that God had chosen in distinction from all others, to shew special favor to, above all other *nations*. It was manifestly agreeable to God's design to constitute things so under the Old Testament, that the means of grace and spiritual privileges and blessings should be, though not wholly, yet in a great measure confined to a *particular family*, much more than those privileges and blessings are confined to any posterity or blood now under the gospel. God did purposely so order things that *that nation* should by these favors be distinguished, not only from those who were not professors of the worship of the true God, but also in a great measure *from other nations*, by a wall of separation that he made. This was not merely a wall of separation, between professors and nonprofessors (such a wall of separation as this remains still in the days of the gospel) but between NATION and NATIONS. God, if he pleases, may by his sovereignty annex his blessing, and in some measure fix it, for his own reasons, to a particular blood, as well as to a particular place or spot of ground, to a certain building, to a particular heap of stones, or altar of brass, to particular garments, and other external things. And it is evident, that he actually did affix his blessing to that particular external family of Jacob, very much as he did to the city Jerusalem, that he chose to place his name there, and to Mount Zion, *where he commanded the blessing*. God did not so affix his blessing to Jerusalem or Mount Zion, as to limit himself, either by confining the blessing wholly to that place, never to bestow it elsewhere; nor by obliging himself always to bestow it on those that sought him there; nor yet obliging himself never to withdraw his blessing from thence, by forsaking his dwelling place there, and leaving it to be a common or profane place; but he was pleased so to annex his blessing to that place, as to make it the seat of his blessing in a peculiar manner, in great distinction from other

places. In like manner did he fix his blessing to that blood or progeny of Jacob. It was a family which he delighted in, and which he blessed in a peculiar manner, and to which he in a great measure confined the blessing; but not so as to limit himself, or so as to oblige himself to bestow it on all of that blood, or not to bestow it on others that were not of that blood. He affixed his blessing to both these, both to the place and nation, by sovereign election. Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14, 15. He annexed and fixed his blessing to both by covenant. To that nation he fixed his blessing by his covenant with the patriarchs. Indeed the main thing, the substance and marrow of that covenant which God made with Abraham and the other patriarchs, was the *covenant of grace*, which is continued in these days of the gospel, and extends to all his spiritual seed of the Gentiles as well as Jews: But yet that covenant with the patriarchs contained other things that were as it were appendages to that great everlasting covenant of grace, promises of lesser matters, subservient to the grand promise of the future seed, and typical of things appertaining to him. Such were those promises that annexed the blessing to a particular country, viz. the land of Canaan, and a particular *blood*, viz. the progeny of Isaac and Jacob. Just so it was also as to the covenant God made with David that we have an account of, 2 Sam. vii. and Psal. cxxxii. If we consider that covenant with regard to what the soul and marrow of it was, it was the covenant of grace; But there were other promises which were as it were appendages of things subservient to the grand covenant, and typical of its benefits; such were promises of the blessing to the nation of the literal Israel, and of continuing the temporal crown of Israel to David's posterity, and of fixing the blessing to Jerusalem or Mount Zion, as the place that he chose to set his name there. And in this sense it was that the *very family* of Jacob were *God's people by covenant*, or his *covenant people*, and his *chosen people*; yea and this even when they were no visible saints, when they were educated and lived in idolatry, and made no profession of the true religion.

On the whole, it is evident that the *very nation* of Israel, not as visible saints, but *as the progeny of Jacob according to the flesh*, were in some respect a *chosen people*, a *people of God*, a *covenant people*, an *holy nation*; even as Jerusalem was a *chosen city*, the *city of God*, a *holy city*, and a city that God had engaged *by covenant* to dwell in.

Thus a sovereign and allwise God was pleased to ordain things with respect to *the nation* of Israel. Perhaps we may not be able to give all the reasons of such a constitution; but some of them seem to be pretty manifest; as,

1. The great and main end of separating one particular nation from all others, as God did *the nation* of Israel, was to prepare the way for the coming of the *Messiah*, who was to proceed of *that blood*. God's covenant with Abraham and the other patriarchs implied that the Messiah should be *of their blood*, or their seed *according to the flesh*. And therefore it was requisite that *their progeny according to the flesh* should be fenced in by a wall of separation, and made *God's people*. If the Messiah had been born of some of the *professors of Abraham's religion*, but of some other nation, that religion being propagated from nation to nation, as it is now under the gospel, it would not have answered the covenant with Abraham, for the Messiah to have been born of Abraham's seed only in this sense. The *Messiah* being by covenant so related to Jacob's *progeny according to the flesh*, God was pleased, agreeably to the nature of such a covenant, to shew great respect to that people on account of that external carnal relation. Therefore the apostle mentions it as one great privilege, that of them *according to the flesh* Christ came, Rom. ix. 5. As the introducing the *Messiah* and his salvation and kingdom was the special design of all God's dealings and peculiar dispensations towards that people, the natural result of this was, that great account should be made of their being *of that nation*, in God's covenant dealings with them.

2. That nation was a *typical nation*. There was then literally a *land*, that was the dwelling place of God; which was

a type of heaven the true dwelling place of God, and an *external city of God*, which was a type of the spiritual city of God; *an external temple of God*, which was a type of his spiritual temple: So there was an external *people and family of God*, by carnal generation, which was a type of his spiritual progeny: And the covenant by which they were made a people of God, was a type of the covenant of grace; and so is sometimes represented as a marriage covenant. God, agreeable to the nature of that dispensation, shewed a great regard to external and carnal things in those days, as types of spiritual things. What a great regard God did shew then to external carnal qualifications for privileges and services, appears in this that there is ten times so much said in the Books of Moses about such qualifications in the institutions of the passover and tabernacle services, as about any moral qualifications whatsoever. And so much were such typical qualifications insisted on, that even by the law of Moses the congregation of the Lord, or public congregation or church (for the word is the same) of visible worshippers of God, and the number of public professors of the true religion, who were visible saints, were not the same: For some were of the latter, that were not of the former; as particularly the eunuchs who were excluded the congregation, though never so externally religious, yea truly pious; and so also bastards, &c.

3. It was the sovereign pleasure of God to choose *that family*, the posterity of *Jacob according to the flesh*, to reserve them for special favors to the end of time. And therefore they are still kept a distinct nation, being still reserved for distinguishing mercy in the latter day, when they shall be restored to the church of God. God is pleased in this way to testify his regard to their holy ancestors, and his regard to their external relation to Christ. Therefore the apostle still speaks of them as an *elect nation*, and *beloved for the fathers' sakes*, even after they were broken off from the good olive by unbelief. God's covenant with Abraham is in some sense in force with respect to that people, and reaches them even to this day; and yet surely they are not God's covenant people, in the sense that visible Christians are. See Lev. xxvi. 42.

If it be here said, It was often foretold by the prophets, that in the days of the gospel other *nations* should be the people of God, as well as the *nation* of the Jews: And when Christ sent forth his apostles, he bid them go and *disciple all nations*.

I answer; By a common figure of speech the prevailing part of a nation are called *the nation*, and what is done to them is said to be done to the nation, and what is done *by* them is said to be done *by* that nation: And it is to be hoped, that the time is coming when the prevailing part of many nations, yea of every nation under heaven, will be regularly brought into the visible church of Christ. And if we by *nations* in these prophecies understand any other than the prevailing part, and it be insisted on that we must understand it of all the people belonging to those nations; there never has yet been any nation in this sense regularly brought into the visible church of Christ, even according to the scheme of those whom *I* oppose: For there never yet has been an whole nation that were outwardly moral. And besides what Mr. Blake says in his *Treatise of the Covenant*, page 238, may be applied here, and serve as an answer to this objection: "The prophecies of the Old Testament (says he) of the glory of the New Testament times, are in Old Testament phrases, by way of allusion to the worship of those times, set forth to us." In Rev. xxi. 24, *nations* are spoken of, as having an interest in the *New Jerusalem*, which yet is represented as perfectly pure, without the least degree of pollution and defilement, ver. 27. And as for the command to the apostles, to *disciple all nations*, it was a direction to them as to what they should attempt, or do as much towards as they could; not a prediction of what they should bring to pass in their day: For they never brought one half of any one nation into the visible Christian church, nor any at all in one half of the nations in the world, it is very probable.

If it should here be further objected, that it is an evidence that Gentile Christians are visible saints, according to the New Testament notion of visible saintship, in the very same manner as the whole Jewish nation were till they were broken off by their obstinate rejection of the Messiah; that the Gen-

tile Christians are represented as being *grafted into the same olive*, from whence the Jews were *broken off by unbelief*, Rom. xi. 17, &c.

I would inquire, What any one can intend by this objection? Whether it be this, viz. That we ought to insist on no higher or better qualifications, in admitting persons as members of the Christian church, and to all its privileges than the whole nation of the Jews, of that generation which lived in Christ's time were possessed of, till they had obstinately persisted in their rejection of him? If this is *not intended*, the objection is nothing to the purpose: Or if this *be* intended, neither then is it to the purpose of those with whom I have especially to do in this controversy, who hold *orthodoxy, knowledge* of the fundamental doctrines of religion, *moral sincerity*, and a *good conversation*, to be qualifications, which ought to be insisted on, in order to a visible church state: For a very great part of those Jews were destitute of these qualifications; many of them were Sadducees, who denied a future state; others of them Herodians, who were occasional conformists with the Romans in their idolatries; the prevailing sect among them were Pharisees, who openly professed the false doctrine of justification by the works of the law and external privileges, that *leaven of the Pharisees*, which Christ warns his disciples to beware of: Many of them were scandalously *ignorant*, for their teachers had taken away the key of knowledge: Multitudes were grossly *vicious*, for it was a generation in which all manner of sin and wickedness prevailed.

I think that text in Rom. xi. can be understood no otherwise, in any consistence with plain fact, than that the Gentile Christians succeeded the Jews, who had been either in themselves or ancestors, the children of Abraham, with respect to a visible interest in the covenant of grace (which, as has been observed, was the substance and marrow of the covenant made with Abraham) until they were broken off from the church, and ceased any longer to be visible saints by their open and obstinate unbelief; (as indeed either they or their ancestors had all been thus broken off from the church of

visible saints; for every branch or family of the stock of Jacob had been in the church of visible saints, and each branch withered and failed through unbelief.) This was the highest and most important sense in which any of the Jews were externally the children of Abraham, and implied the greatest privileges. But there was another sense, in which the whole nation, including even those of them who were no visible saints, were his children (which as has been shewn) implied great privileges, wherein Christian Gentiles do not succeed them, though they have additional ecclesiastical privileges, vastly beyond the Jews.

Whether I have succeeded, in rightly explaining these matters, or no, yet my failing in it is of no great importance with regard to the strength of the objection, that occasioned my attempting it; which was, that scandalously *wicked* men among the Jews are called *God's people*, &c. The objection, as I observed, is as much against the scheme of those whom I oppose, as against my scheme; and therefore it as much concerns *them*, to find out some explanation of the matter that shall shew something else is intended by it, than their having the qualifications of visible saints, as it does me; and a failing in such an attempt as much affects and hurts their cause, as it does mine.

## OBJECTION III.

THOSE in Israel, who made no profession of piety of heart, did according to divine institution partake of the passover; a Jewish *sacrament*, representing the same things, and a seal of the very same covenant of grace with the *Lord's supper*; and particularly it would be unreasonable to suppose, that all made a profession of godliness whom God commanded to keep that first *passover* in Egypt, which the whole congregation were required to keep, and there is no shadow of any such thing as their all first making a solemn public profession of those things wherein true piety consists: And so the people in general partook of the *passover*, from

generation to generation; but it would be hard to suppose, that they all professed a supreme regard to God in their hearts.

ANSWER 1. The affair of the Israelites' participation of the *passover*, and particularly that first *passover* in Egypt, is attended with altogether as much difficulty in regard to the qualifications which the *objectors* themselves suppose requisite in communicants at the Lord's table, as with regard to those which I insist upon; and if there be any argument in the case, it is fully as strong an argument against *their* scheme, as mine. *One* thing they insist upon as a requisite qualification for the Lord's supper, is a public profession of religion as to the essential doctrines of it: But there is no more shadow of a public profession of this kind, preceding that passover in Egypt, than of a profession of godliness. Here, not to insist on the great doctrines of the *fall of man*, of our *undone state by nature*, of the *Trinity*, of our *dependence on the free grace of God for justification*, &c. let us take only those two doctrines of a *future state of rewards and punishments*, and the doctrine of *the Messiah to come*, that Messiah who was represented in the *passover*: Is there any more appearance, in sacred story of the people's making a public profession in Egypt of these doctrines before they partook of the passover, than of their making profession of the love of God? And is there any more probability of the former, than of the latter? *Another* thing which they on the other side suppose necessary to a due attendance on the Lord's supper, is, that when any have openly been guilty of gross sins they should, before they come to this sacrament, openly *confess* and *humble* themselves for their faults. Now it is evident by many Scriptures, that a great part of the children of Israel in Egypt had been guilty of joining with the Egyptians in worshipping their false gods, and had lived in idolatry: But the history in Exodus gives us no account of any public solemn confession of, or humiliation for this great sin, before they came to the passover. Mr. Stoddard observes (*Appeal* p. 58, 59) that there was in the church of Israel a way appointed by God for the removal of scandals; men being required in that case to offer up their

*sacrifices*, attended with *confession* and visible signs of *repentance*. But where do we read of the people's offering up sacrifices in Egypt, attended with confession for removing the scandal of that most heinous sin of *idolatry* they had lived in? Or is there any more probability of their publicly professing their repentance and humiliation for their sin, before their celebrating the passover, than of their publicly professing to love God above all? *Another* thing which they suppose to be requisite in order to admission to the Lord's table, and about which they would have a particular care be taken, is, that every person admitted give evidence of a competent *knowledge* in the doctrines of religion, and none be allowed to partake who are grossly ignorant. Now there is no more appearance of this with regard to the congregation in Egypt, than of a *profession of godliness*; and it is as difficult to suppose it. There is abundant reason to suppose, that vast numbers in that nation, consisting of more than a million of adult persons, had been brought up in a great degree of ignorance, amidst their slavery in Egypt, where the people seem to have almost forgotten the true God and the true religion: And though pains had been taken by Moses, now for a short season to instruct the people better; yet it must be considered, it is a very great work, to take a whole nation under such degrees of ignorance and prejudice, and bring every one of them to a competent degree of knowledge in religion; and a greater work still for Moses both thus to instruct them, and also by examination or otherwise, to come to a just satisfaction, that all had indeed attained to such knowledge.

Mr. Stoddard insists, that if grace be requisite in the Lord's supper, it would have been as much so in the *passover*, in as much as the chief thing the *passover* (as well as the Lord's supper, has respect to and represents, is Christ's sufferings. But if on this account the same qualifications are requisite in both ordinances, then it would be as requisite that the partakers should have knowledge to *discern the Lord's body* (in Mr. Stoddard's sense of 1 Cor. xi. 29) in the *passover*, as in the Lord's supper. But this certainly is as difficult to suppose, as that they professed godliness: For how does

it appear, that the people in general who partook of the *passover*, knew that it signified the death of the *Messiah*, and the way in which he should make atonement for sin by his blood? Does it look very likely that they should know this, when Christ's own disciples had not knowledge thus to *discern the Lord's body* in the *passover*, of which they partook from year to year with their Master? Can it be supposed, they actually knew Christ's death, and the design of it to be thereby signified, when they did not so much as realize the fact itself, that Christ was to die, at least not till the year before the last passover? And besides, how unreasonable would it be to suppose, that the Jews understood what was signified, pertaining to Christ and salvation by him, in all those many kinds of sacrifices, which they attended and partook of, and all the vast variety of ceremonies belonging to them; all which sacrifices were sacramental representations of Christ's death, as well as the sacrifice of the passover? The apostle tells us that all these things had *a shadow of good things to come*, the things concerning *Christ*; and yet there are many of them, which the church of Christ to this day does not understand; though we are under a thousand times greater advantage to understand them than they were; having the *New Testament*, wherein God uses *great plainness of speech*, to guide us, and living in days wherein the *vail* which Moses put over his face is taken away in Christ, and the vail of the temple rent, and have the substance and antitype plainly exhibited, and so have opportunity to compare these with those shadows.

If it be objected, as a difficulty that lies against our supposing a profession of godliness requisite to a participation of the *passover*, that they who were uncircumcised, were expressly forbidden to partake, and if conversion was as important, and a more important qualification than circumcision, why were not the *unregenerate* as expressly forbidden? I answer; Why were not *scandalous* sinners as expressly forbidden! And why was not *moral sincerity* as expressly required as circumcision?

If it be objected that they were *all* expressly and strictly required to keep the passover; but if grace was requisite, and

God knew that many of the partakers would have no grace, why would he give such universal orders?

I answer, when God gave those commands, he knew that the commands, in all their strictness, would reach many persons who in the time of the *passover* would be without so much as *moral sincerity* in religion. Every man in the nation, of every generation, and which should be in being each year, from the first institution till the death of Christ, were all (excepting such as were ceremonially unclean, or in a journey) strictly required to keep the feast of *passover*; and yet God knew that multitudes would be without the qualification of *moral seriousness* in religion. It would be very unreasonable to suppose, that every single person in the nation was morally serious, even in the very best time that ever passed over the nation; or that ever there was such a happy day with that nation, or any other nation under heaven, wherein *all* were morally sincere in religion. How much then was it otherwise many times with that nation, which was so prone to corruption, and so often generally involved in gross wickedness? But the strict command of God to keep the *passover* reached the morally *insincere*, as well as others; they are no where excepted, any more than the *unconverted*. And as to any general commands of God's word, these no more required men to turn from a state of moral insincerity before they came to the *passover*, than they required them to turn from a graceless state.

But further, I reply, that God required them all to keep the *passover*, no more strictly than he required them all to *love* the Lord their God with their whole heart: And if God might strictly command this, he might also strictly command them, to keep that ordinance wherein they were especially to profess it, and seal their profession of it. That *evil generation* were not expressly forbidden to keep the *passover* in succeeding years, for the whole *forty years* during which they went on provoking God very often by gross sinning and open rebelling; but still the express and strict commands for the whole congregation to keep the *passover* reached them, nor were they released from their obligation.

If it be said, that we must suppose multitudes in Israel attended the *passover*, from age to age, without such a *visibility of piety* as I have insisted on; and yet we do not find their attending this ordinance charged on them as a *sin*, in scripture: I answer; We must also suppose that multitudes in Israel, from age to age, attended the passover, who lived in *moral insincerity*, yea and *scandalous wickedness*. For the people in general very often notoriously corrupted themselves, and declined to ways of open and great transgression; and yet there is reason to think, that in these times of corruption, for the most part, they upheld *circumcision* and the *passover*; and we do not find their attending on these ordinances under such circumstances, any more expressly charged on them as a sin, than their coming without piety of heart. The *ten tribes* continued constantly in *idolatry* for about two hundred and fifty years, and there is ground to suppose, that in the mean time they ordinarily kept up circumcision and the passover: For though they worshipped God by images, yet they maintained most of the ceremonial observances of the law of Moses, called *the manner of the God of the land*, which their priests taught the Samaritans, who were settled in their stead, 2 Kings, xvii. 26, 27. Nevertheless we do not find Elijah, Elisha, or other prophets that were sent among them, reproving them for attending these ordinances without the required moral qualifications. Indeed there are some things in the writings of the prophets, which may be interpreted as a reproof of this; but no more as a reproof of this, than of attending God's ordinances, without a gracious sincerity and true piety of heart and life.

How many seasons were there, wherein the people in general fell into and lived in *idolatry*, that scandal of scandals, in the times of the judges, and in the times of the kings both in Judah and Israel? But still amidst all this wickedness, they continued to attend the sacrament of *circumcision*: We have every whit as much evidence of it, as that they attended the *passover* without a profession of godliness: We have no account of their ever leaving it off at such seasons, nor any hint of its being renewed (as a thing which had ceased) when they

came to reform. Though we have so full an account of the particulars of Josiah's reformation, after that long scandalous reign of Manasseh, there is no hint of any reviving of *circumcision*, or returning to it after a cessation. And where have we an account of the people's being once reproved for attending this holy sacrament while thus involved in *scandalous sin*, in all the Old Testament? And where is this once charged on them as a sin, any more than in the case of unconverted persons attending the sacrament of the *passover*.*

Answ. II. Whatever was the case with respect to the qualifications for the sacraments of the Old Testament dispensation, I humbly conceive it is nothing to the purpose in the present argument, nor needful to determine us with respect to the qualifications for the sacraments of the *Christian* dispensation, which is a matter of such plain fact in the *New Testament*. Far am I from thinking the Old Testament to be like an old Almanack out of use; nay I think it is evident from the New Testament that some things which had their first institution under the Old Testament, are continued under the New; for instance, particularly, the acceptance of the infant seed of believers as children of the covenant with their parents; and probably some things belonging to the order and discipline of Christian churches, had their first beginning in the Jewish synagogue. But yet, all allow that the Old Testament *dispensation* is out of date, with its ordinances: And I think in a matter pertaining to the constitution and order of the *New Testament church*, that is a matter of fact wherein the *New Testament* itself is express, full and abundant, in such a case to have recourse to the Mosaic dispensation for rules or precedents to determine our judgment, is quite needless, and out of reason. There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines do so much differ, as the stating the precise agreement and difference be-

* Let the reader here take notice of what is observed in the conclusion of my answer to the objection from the instance of Judas.

tween the two dispensations of Moses and of Christ. And probably the reason why God has left it so intricate, is, because our understanding the ancient dispensation, and God's design in it, is not of so great importance, nor does so nearly concern us. Since God uses great plainness of speech in the New Testament, which is as it were the charter and municipal law of the Christian church, what need we run back to the ceremonial and typical institutions of an antiquated dispensation, wherein God's declared design was, to deliver divine things in comparative obscurity, hid under a vail, and involved in clouds?

We have no more occasion for going to search among the types, dark revelations, and carnal ordinances of the Old Testament, to find out whether this matter of fact concerning the constitution and order of the New Testament church be true, than we have occasion for going there to find out whether any other matter of fact, we have an account of in the New Testament be true; as particularly whether there were such officers in the primitive church as *bishops* and *deacons*, whether *miraculous* gifts of the Spirit were common in the apostles' days, whether the believing Gentiles were received into the primitive Christian church, and the like.

Answ. III. I think, nothing can be alleged from the Holy Scripture, that is sufficient to prove a *profession of godliness* to be not a qualification requisite in order to a due and regular participation of the *passover*.

Although none of the requisite moral qualifications for this Jewish sacrament, either of one kind or other, are near so clearly made known in the Old Testament, as the qualifications for the *Christian* sacraments are in the New; and although the supposing a visibility, either of moral sincerity, or sanctifying grace, to be requisite, is (both respecting the one case and the other) involved in some obscurity and difficulty; yet I would humbly offer what appears to me to be the truth concerning that matter, in the things that follow.

(1.) Although the people in Egypt, before the *first passover*, probably made no *explicit* public profession at all, either

of their *humiliation for their former idolatry*, or of *present devotedness of heart to God*; it being before any particular institution of an express public profession, either of godliness, or repentance in case of scandal: Yet I think there was some sort of *public manifestation*, or *implicit profession* of both. Probably in Egypt they implicitly professed the same things, which they afterwards professed more expressly and solemnly in the *wilderness*. The Israelites in Egypt had very much to affect their hearts, before the last plague, in the great things that God had done for them; especially in some of the latter plagues, wherein they were so remarkably distinguished from the Egyptians: They seem now to be brought to a tender frame, and a disposition to shew much respect to God (see Exod. xii. 27) and were probably now very forward to profess themselves devoted to him, and true penitents.

(2.) After the institution of an *explicit public profession* of devotedness to God, or (which is the same thing) of true piety of heart, this was wont to be required in order to a partaking of the *passover* and other sacrifices and sacraments that adult persons were admitted to. Accordingly all the adult persons that were circumcised at Gilgal, had made this profession a little before on the plains of Moab; as has been already observed. Not that all of them were truly gracious; but seeing they all had a profession and visibility, Christ in his dealings with his church as to external things, acted not as the searcher of hearts, but as the Head of the visible church, accommodating himself to the present state of mankind; and therefore he represents himself in scripture as *trusting* his people's profession; as I formerly observed.

(3.) In *degenerate times* in Israel, both priests and people were very *lax* with respect to covenanting with God, and professing devotedness to him; and these professions were used, as public professions commonly are still in corrupt times, merely as matters of *form* and *ceremony*, at least by great multitudes.

(4.) Such was the nature of the Levitical dispensation, that it had in no measure so great tendency to preclude and prevent *hypocritical professions*, as the *New Testament dispensa-*

*tion*; particularly on account of the vastly greater *darkness* of it. For the covenant of grace was not then so fully revealed, and consequently the nature of the conditions of that covenant not then so well known: There was then a far more obscure revelation of those great duties of repentance towards God and faith in the Mediator, and of those things wherein true holiness consists, and wherein it is distinguished from other things: Persons then had not equal advantage to know their own hearts, while viewing themselves in this comparatively dim light of Moses's law, as now they have in the clear sunshine of the gospel. In that state of the minority of the church, the nature of true piety, as consisting in the *spirit of adoption*, or ingenuous filial love to God, and as distinguished from a *spirit of bondage*, servile fear and self-love, was not so clearly made known. The Israelites were therefore the more ready to mistake, for true piety, that moral seriousness and those warm affections and resolutions that resulted from that *spirit of bondage*, which shewed itself in Israel remarkably at Mount Sinai; and which, throughout all the Old Testament times, they were especially incident to.

(5.) God was pleased in a great measure *to wink at* and *suffer* (though he did not properly allow) that *laxness* there was among the people, with regard to the visibility of holiness, and the moral qualifications requisite to an attendance on their sacraments; as also he did in many other cases of great irregularity, under that dark, imperfect, and comparatively carnal dispensation; such as polygamy, putting away their wives at pleasure, the revenger of blood killing the manslayer &c, and as he winked at the worshipping in high places in Solomon's time; (1 Kings iii. 4, 5) at the neglect of keeping the feast of tabernacles according to the law, from Joshua's time until after the captivity; (Neh. viii. 17) and as he winked at the neglect of the synagogue worship, or the public service of God in particular congregations, until after the captivity,*

* *Prid. Connect.* Part I. p. 354—536, and 555, 556. 9th Edit. The word translated *synagogues* Psal. lxxiv. 8, signifies *assemblies*; and is supposed by the generality of learned men to relate to another sort of assemblies.

though the light of nature together with the general rules of the law of Moses, did sufficiently teach and require it.

(6.) It seems to be from time to time foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, that there would be a great alteration in this respect, in the days of the gospel; that under the new dispensation there should be far *greater purity* in the church. Thus in the forementioned place in Ezekiel it is foretold, that "Those who are [*visibly*] uncircumcised in heart, should NO MORE enter into God's sanctuary." Again Ezek. xx. 37, 38. "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me." It seems to be a prophecy of the greater purity of those who are visibly *in covenant with God*. Isa. iv. 3. "And it shall come to pass that he that *is* left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living [i. e. *has a name to live*, or is enrolled among the saints] in Jerusalem." Isa. lii. 1. "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; from henceforth there shall NO MORE come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Zech. xiv. 21. "And in that day, there shall be NO MORE the Canaanite in the house of the Lord."

(7.) This is just such an alteration as might reasonably be expected from what we are taught of the whole *nature* of the *two dispensations*. As the one had *carnal ordinances* (so they are called Heb. ix. 10) the other a *spiritual* service; (John iv. 24) the one an *earthly* Canaan, the other an *heavenly*; the one an *external* Jerusalem, the other a *spiritual*; the one an *earthly* high priest, the other an *heavenly*; the one a *worldly* sanctuary, the other a *spiritual*; the one a bodily and *temporal* redemption (which is all that they generally discerned or understood in the passover) the other a *spiritual* and *eternal*. And agreeably to these things, it was so ordered in providence, that Israel, the congregation that should enter this *worldly* sanctuary, and attend these *carnal* ordinances, should be much more a *worldly*, *carnal* congregation, than the New Testament congregation. One reason why it was ordered in

providence that there should be such a difference, seems to be this, viz. That the Messiah might have the honor of introducing a state of greater purity and spiritual glory. Hence God is said to find *fault* with that ancient dispensation of the covenant, Heb. viii. 7, 8. And the time of introducing the new dispensation is called the time of *reformation*, Heb. ix. 10. And one thing, wherein the amendment of what God found fault with in the former dispensation should consist, the apostle intimates, is the greater *purity* and *spirituality* of the church, Heb. viii. 7, 8, 11.

## OBJECTION IV.

IT is not reasonable to suppose that the multitudes which John the Baptist baptized, made a *profession* of saving grace, or had any such *visibility* of true piety as has been insisted on.

Answ. Those whom John baptized, *came to him confessing their sins*, making a profession of some kind of *repentance*: and it is not reasonable to suppose, the repentance they professed was specifically or in kind *diverse* from that which he had instructed them in, and called them to, which is called *repentance for the remission of sins*; and that is saving repentance. John's baptism is called *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*: I know not how such a phrase can be reasonably understood any otherwise, than so as to imply, that his *baptism* was some exhibition of that repentance, and a seal of the profession of it. Baptism is a seal of some sort of religious profession, in adult persons: But the very name of John's baptism shews, that it was a seal of a profession of *repentance for the remission of sins*. It is said, Luke iii. 3. "John PREACHED the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." What can be understood by this, but his *preaching* that men should now speedily *turn to God*, by true *repentance and faith* in the promised Saviour, and *come and confess their sins*, and openly declare this repentance towards God, and faith in the Lamb of God, and that they should con-

firm and seal this their profession by *baptism*, as well as therein receive the seal of God's willingness to remit the sins of such as had this faith and repentance. Accordingly we are told, the *people came and were baptized of him, confessing their sins*, manifesting and professing that sort of repentance and faith which he preached. They had no notion of any *other sort* of repentance put into their heads, that they could suppose John *called* them to professs in *baptism*, but this accompanied with *faith* in the Lamb whom he called them to behold; for he *preached* no other to them. The people that John baptized, professed both *repentance for the remission of sins*, and also *faith in the Messiah*; as is evident by Acts xix. 4, 5. "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him that should come after him;" i. e. on *Christ Jesus*: "When they heard this [John's preaching] they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

If it be objected here, that we are told, Matth. iii. 5, 6. "There went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins;" and that it is not to be imagined *all* these made any credible profession of saving repentance and faith: I answer, No more is to be understood by these expressions, according to the phraseology of the scripture, than that there was a very great resort of people from these places to John. Nor is any more to be understood by the like term of universality in John iii. 26. "They came to John and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and ALL MEN come to him;" that is, there was a great resort to him from all quarters. It is in no wise unreasonable to suppose, there was indeed a very great number of people that came to John from the places mentioned, who being exceedingly moved by his preaching, in that time of extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit, made profession of the faith and repentance which John preached. Doubtless there were many more professors than real converts: But still in the great resort to John, there were many of the latter char-

acter ; as we may infer from the prophecy ; as appears by Luke i. 16, 17, " and many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." And from that account of fact in Matth. xi. 12. " From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." And in Luke xvi. 16. " The law and the prophets were until John : Since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and EVERY MAN presseth into it." Here the expression is no less universal, than that which is objected in Matth. iii. 5, 6. As to those wicked Pharisees, that so much opposed Christ, some of them I suppose had been baptized by John, and then had a great shew of repentance and faith ; but they afterwards apostatized, and were much worse than ever before : Therefore Christ speaks of them as being like a *house* from *which the unclean spirit* is visibly turned out for *a while*, and is *left empty, swept, and garnished*, but afterward is *repossessed*, and has many devils instead of one, Luke xi. 24, &c. Yet as to the greater part of these Pharisees, they were not baptized by John ; as appears by Luke vii. 29, 30.

If it be further objected, that John in baptizing such multitudes could not have *time* to be sufficiently informed of those he baptized, whether their profession of godliness was *credible* or no : I answer ; That we are not particularly informed of the circumstances of his teaching, and of the assistance he was favored with, and the means he had of information concerning those whom he baptized : But we may be sure of one thing, viz. He had as much opportunity to inquire into the credibility of their profession, as he had to inquire into their *doctrinal* knowledge and *moral* character ; which my opponents suppose to be necessary, as well as I : And this is enough to silence the present objection.

## OBJECTION V.

CHRIST says, Matth. xx. 16, and again, chap. xxii. 14, that *many are called, but few are chosen.* By which it is evident, that there are *many* who belong to the *visible church*, and yet but *few* real and true *saints*; and that it is ordinarily thus, even under the *New Testament*, and in days of gospel light: And therefore that *visibility* of *saintship*, whereby persons are visible saints in a Scripture sense, cannot imply an apparent probability of their being *real* saints, or truly gracious persons.

ANSWER. In these texts, by those that are *called*, are not meant those who are visible saints, and have the requisite qualifications for Christian sacraments; but all such as have the *external call* of the word of God, and have its offers and invitations made to them. And it is undoubtedly true, and has been matter of fact, for the most part, that of those *called* in this sense, *many* have been but *only* called, and never truly obedient to the call, *few* have been true saints. So it was in the Jewish nation, which the parable in the twentieth of Matthew has a special respect to; they in general had the *external call* of God's word, and in general attended many religious duties, in hopes of God's favor and reward, which is called *laboring in God's vineyard*; and yet but *few* of them eventually obtained salvation; nay, great multitudes of those who were *called* in this sense, were *scandalous* persons, and gross hypocrites. The Pharisees and Sadducees were *called*, and they *labored in the vineyard*, in the sense of the parable; for which they expected great rewards above the Gentile converts or proselytes; wherefore their *eye was evil* towards them, and they could not bear that they should be made *equal* to them: But still these Pharisees and Sadducees had not generally the intellectual and moral qualifications, that my opponents suppose requisite for *Christian* sacraments; being generally scandalous persons, denying some fundamental

principles of religion, and explaining away some of its most important precepts. Thus *many* in Christendom are called by the outward call of God's word, and yet *few* of them are in a state of salvation: But not all these that sit under the sound of the gospel, and hear its invitations, are fit to come to sacraments.

That by those who are *called*, in this saying of our Saviour is meant those that have the *gospel offer*, and not those who belong to the society of *visible saints*, is evident beyond all dispute, in Matth. xxii. 14. By the *many that are called*, are plainly intended the many that are *invited to the wedding*.... In the foregoing parable, we have an accout of those that from time to time were *bidden* or CALLED (for the word is the same in the original) verse 3. "And sent forth his servants to CALL them that were CALLED [καλεσαι τους κεκλημενους] and they would not come." This has respect to the Jews, who refused not only savingly to come to Christ, but refused so much as to come into the visible church of Christ. Verse 4. "Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden [or CALLED] Behold, I have prepared my dinner," &c. Verse 8. "They which were bidden [or CALLED] were not worthy." Verse 9. "Go ye therefore to the high ways, and as many as ye shall find, bid [or CALL καλεσατε] to the marriage," or nuptial banquet; representing the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles; who upon it came into the *king's house*, i. e. the visible church, and among them *one that had not a wedding garment, who was bound hand and foot, and cast out when the king came*: And then at the conclusion, Christ adds this remark, verse 14. "For many are CALLED or bidden [κλητοι] but few are chosen;" which must have reference, not only to the *man* last mentioned, who came into the wedding house, the Christian visible church, *without a wedding garment*, but to those also mentioned before, who were *called*, but would not so much as *come into the king's house*, or join to the visible Christian church. To suppose this saying to have reference only to that *one man* who came without *a wedding garment* (representing one that comes into the visible church, but is not a true saint) would

be to make the introduction of this aphorism, and its connexion with what went before, very strange and unintelligible, because then it would be as much as to say thus, "*Multitudes* came into the king's house, who were *called*, and the house was full of guests; but among them was found *one* man who was not *chosen*; *for many are* called, *but few are* chosen."

## OBJECTION VI.

WHEN the servants of the householder, in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matth xiii.) unexpectedly found *tares* among the wheat, they said to their master, "Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them; let both grow together until the harvest." Which shews the mind of Christ, that we ought not to go about to make a *distinction* between true saints and apparent in this world, or aim at any such thing as admitting true saints *only* into the visible church, but ought to let *both* be *together* in the church till the day of *judgment*.

ANSW. I. These things in this parable have no manner of reference to *introduction* into the field, or *admission* into the visible church, as though no care nor measures should be taken to prevent *tares* being *sown*; or as though the servants who had the charge of the field, would have done well to have taken *tares*, appearing to be such, and *planted* them in the field amongst the wheat: No, instead of this, the parable plainly implies the contrary. But the words cited have wholly respect to a CASTING OUT and purging the field, *after* the tares had been introduced *unawares*, and *contrary to design*, through men's infirmity and Satan's procurement. Concerning purging *tares* out of the field, or casting men out of the church, there is no difference between me and those whom I oppose in the present controversy: And therefore it

is impossible there should be any objection from that which Christ says here concerning this matter, against *me*, but what is as much of an objection against *them*; for we both hold the same thing. It is agreed on all hands, that adult persons, actually admitted to communion of the visible church, however they may behave themselves so as to bring their spiritual state into suspicion, yet ought not to be *cast out*, unless they are obstinate in *heresy* or *scandal*; lest, while we go about to root out the *tares*, we should root out the *wheat* also. And it is also agreed on all hands, that when those, represented under the name of *tares* bring forth such evil fruit, such scandalous and obstinate wickedness, as is plainly and visibly inconsistent with the being of true grace, they ought to be *cast out*. And therefore it is impossible that this objection should be any thing to the purpose.

Answ. II. I think this parable, instead of being a just objection *against* the doctrine I maintain, is on the contrary a clear evidence *for it*.

For (1.) the parable shews plainly, that if any are introduced into the field of the householder, or church of Christ, who prove to be not *wheat* (*i. e.* not true saints) they are brought in *unawares*, or contrary to design; and that they are what do not properly belong there. If *tares* are as properly to be *sown* in the field, as is the *wheat*, which must be the case if the Lord's supper be a *converting* ordinance; then surely no care ought to be taken to introduce *wheat* only, and no respect ought to be had more to the qualities of *wheat* in sowing the field, than the qualities of *tares*; nor is there any more impropriety in the *tares* having a place there, than the *wheat*: But this surely is altogether inconsistent with the scope of the parable.

(2.) This parable plainly shews, that those who are in the visible church, have all of them at first a *visibility*, or appearance to human sight of *true grace*, or of the nature of true saints. For it is observed, *tares* have this property, that when they first appear, and till the products of the field arrive to some maturity, they have such a resemblance of *wheat*, that it is next to impossible to *distinguish* them.

## OBJECTION VII.

CHRIST himself administered the Lord's supper to Judas, whom he knew at the same time to be *graceless*; which is a full evidence, that grace is not *in itself* a requisite qualification in order to coming to the Lord's supper; and if it be not requisite in itself, a *profession* of it cannot be requisite.

Answ. I. It is to me apparent, that Judas was not present at the administration of the Lord's supper. It is true, he was present at the passover, and *dipped with Christ in the* paschal *dish*. The three former Evangelists do differ in the order of the account they give of this *dipping in the dish*. Luke gives an account of it *after* his account of the Lord's supper, Luke xxii. 21. But Matthew and Mark both give an account of it *before*. (Matth. xxvi. 23. Mark xiv. 20.) And the like might be shown in abundance of instances of these three Evangelists differing one from another in the *order* of their narratives; one places those things in his history after others, which another places first; these sacred historians not undertaking to declare precisely the *date* of every incident, but regarding more the truth of facts, than the order of time. However, in the present case, the nature of the thing speaks for itself, and shews, that *Judas's dipping with Christ in the dish*, or *his hand being with Christ on the table*, or *receiving a sop dipped in the dish*, must be in that order wherein Matthew and Mark place it in their history, *viz.* at the *passover*, antecedent to the Lord's supper: For there is no such thing in the Lord's supper as *dipping of sops*, and *dipping together in the dish*; but there was such a thing in the passover, where all had their hand together in the dish, and dipt their sops in the bitter sauce. None of these three Evangelists give us any account of the time when Judas went out: But John, who is vastly more particular as to what passed that night, and is every where more exact as to the order of time than the other Evangelists, gives us an account, and is very precise as to the time, *viz.* that *Jesus when he gave him the sop*, at the same

time sent him away, bidding him *do quickly what he intended to do;* and accordingly *when he had received the sop, he went immediately out.* John xiii. 27....30. Now this sop being at the *passover*, it is evident he was not present at the *Lord's supper* which followed. Many of the best expositors are of this opinion, such as Van Mastricht, Dr. Doddridge, and others.

Answ. II. If Judas was there, I deny the consequence.... As I have observed once and again concerni..g the Lord's dealings with his people under the Old Testament, so under the New the same observation takes place: Christ did not come to *judge the secrets of men*, nor did ordinarily act in his external dealings with his disciples, and in administration of ordinances, as the *Searcher of Hearts;* but rather as the Head of the visible church, proceeding according to what was exhibited in profession and visibility; herein setting an example to his ministers, who should stand in his place when he was gone, and act in his name in the administration of ordinances. Judas had made the same profession of regard to his master, and of forsaking all for him, as the other disciples: And therefore Christ did not openly renounce him till he himself had destroyed his profession and visibility of saintship, by public scandalous apostacy. Supposing then the presence of Judas at the Lord's supper, this affords no consequence in favor of what I oppose.

Answ. III. If they with whom I have to do in this controversy, are not contented with the answers already given, and think there is a remaining difficulty in this matter lying against *my scheme*, I will venture to tell them, that the difficulty lies full as hard against *their own scheme;* and if there be any strength at all in the argument, it is to all intents of the same strength against the need of those *qualifications* which they themselves suppose to be necessary in order to an approach to the Lord's table, as against those which I think so. For although they do not think renewing saving grace necessary, yet they suppose *moral seriousness* or (as they variously

speak) *moral sincerity* in religion to be necessary: They suppose it to be requisite, that persons should have some kind of serious principle and view in coming to the Lord's table; some sort of intention of subjecting themselves to Christ, and of seeking and serving him, in general; and in particular some religious end in coming to the sacramental supper, some religious respect to Christ in it. But now did not Christ at that time perfectly know, that Judas had none of these things? He knew he had nothing of sincerity in the Christian religion, or of regard to *Christ* in that ordinance, of any sort whatsoever; he knew that Satan had entered into him and filled his heart, and that he was then cherishing in himself a malignant, malicious spirit against his master, excited by the reproof Christ had lately given him (compare John xii. 8. with Matth. xxvi. 8....16, and Mark xiv. 4....11) and that he had already formed a traitorous murderous design against him, and was now in the prosecution of that bloody design, having actually just before been to the chief priests, and agreed with them to *betray* him for thirty pieces of silver. (See Matth. xxvi. 14, 15, 16. Mark xiv. 10, 11. Luke xxii. 3....6, and John xiii. 2.) Christ knew these things, and knew that Judas was utterly unqualified for the *holy* sacrament of the Lord's supper; though it had not yet been made known to the church, or the disciples....Therefore it concerns those on the contrary part in this controversy, to find out some solution of this difficulty, as much as it does me; and they will find they have as much need to take refuge in the solution already given, in one or other of the two preceding answers to this objection.

By the way I would observe, that Christ's not excluding Judas from the passover, under these circumstances, *knowing* him to be thus *unqualified*, without so much as *moral sincerity*, &c. is another thing that effectually enervates all the strength of the objection against me, from the *passover*: For Judas did not only in common with others fall under God's strict command, in the law of Moses, to keep this feast, without any exception of his case there to be found; but *Christ* himself, with his own hand, gave him the *sop*, a part of the paschal

feast; even although at the same instant he had in view the man's secret wickedness and hypocrisy, the traitorous design which was then in his heart, and the horrid conspiracy with the chief priests, which he had already entered into, and was now in prosecution of: This was then in Christ's mind, and he intimated it to him, at the same moment when he gave him the sop, saying, *What thou dost, do quickly.* This demonstrates that the objection from the *passover* is no stronger argument against my scheme, than the scheme of those whom I oppose; because it is no stronger against the necessity of *sanctifying grace*, the qualification for Christian sacraments, which I insist upon, than it is against the necessity of *moral seriousness and sincerity*, the qualifications which they insist upon.

## OBJECTION VIII.

IF *sanctifying grace* be a requisite qualification in order to persons' due access to Christian sacraments, God would have given some *certain rule* whereby those who are to admit them, might know whether they have such grace or not.

ANSW. This objection was obviated in my stating the question. However, I will say something further to it in this place; and would here observe, that if there be any strength in this objection, it lies in the truth of this proposition, viz. *That whatever qualifications are requisite in order to persons, due access to Christian sacraments, God has given some* certain rule, *whereby those who admit them, may know whether they have those qualifications, or not.* If this proposition is not true, then there is no force at all in the argument. But I dare say, there is not a divine, nor Christian of common sense, on the face of the earth, that will assert and stand to it, that this proposition is true: For there is none will deny, that some sort of belief of the being of a God, some sort of belief that the scriptures are the word of God, that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, and that Jesus is the Messiah,

are qualifications requisite in order to persons' due access to Christian sacraments; and yet God has given those who are to admit persons no *certain rule* whereby they may know whether they believe any one of these things. Neither has he given his ministers or churches any *certain rule*, whereby they may know whether any person that offers himself for admission to the sacrament, has any degree of moral sincerity, moral seriousness of spirit, or any inward moral qualification whatsoever. These things have all their existence in the soul, which is out of our neighbor's view. Not therefore a *certainty*, but a *profession* and *visibility* of these things, must be the rule of the church's proceedings; and it is as good and as reasonable a rule of judgment concerning *saving grace*, as it is concerning any other internal invisible qualifications, which cannot be certainly known by any but the subject himself.

## OBJECTION IX.

IF *sanctifying grace* be requisite to a due approach to the Lord's table, then no man may come but he that *knows* he has such grace. A man must not only *think* he has a right to the Lord's supper, in order to his lawful partaking of it; but he must *know* he has a right. If nothing but *sanctification* gives him a *real right* to the Lord's supper, then nothing short of the knowledge of sanctification gives him a *known right* to it: Only an *opinion* and *probable hopes* of a right will not warrant his coming.

Answ. I. I desire those who insist on this as an invincible argument, to consider calmly whether they themselves ever did or ever will stand to it. For here these two things are to be observed:

(1.) If no man may warrantably come to the Lord's supper, but such as know they have a right, then no *unconverted* persons may come unless they not only think, but know it is the *mind of God*, that unconverted persons should come, and

know that he does not require *grace* in order to their coming. For unless they know that men may come *without grace*, they cannot know that they themselves have a *right* to come, *being without grace*. And will any one assert and stand to it, that of necessity, all adult persons of every age, rank and condition of life, must be so versed in this controversy, as to have a certainty in this matter, in order to their coming to the Lord's supper? It would be most absurd for any to assert it a point of easy proof, the evidence of which is so clear and obvious to every one of every capacity, as to supercede all occasion for their being studied in divinity, in order to a certainty of its truth, that persons may come to the sacred table of the Lord, notwithstanding they know themselves to be *unconverted!* Especially considering, it seems a matter of plain fact, that the contrary to this opinion has been in general the judgment of Protestant divines and churches, from the reformation to this day; and that the most part of the greatest divines that have ever appeared in the world, who have spent their lives in the diligent prayerful study of divinity, have been fixed in the reverse of that opinion. This is sufficient at least to shew, that this opinion is not so plain as not to be a disputable point; and that the evidence of it is not so obvious to persons of the lowest capacity and little inquiry, as that all may come to a certainty in the matter, without difficulty and without study. I would humbly ask here, What has been the case in fact in *our* churches, who have practised for so many years on this principle? Can it be pretended, or was it ever supposed, that the communicants in general, even persons of mean intellectuals and low education, not excepting the very boys and girls of sixteen years old, that have been taken into the church, had so studied divinity, as not only to *think*, but know, that our pious forefathers, and almost all the Protestant and Christian divines in the world have been in an *error* in this matter? And have people ever been taught the *necessity* of this previous knowledge? Has it ever been insisted upon, that before persons come to the Lord's supper, they must look so far into the case of a *right* to the Lord's supper, as to come not only to a full settled opinion, but even

*certainty* in this point? And has any one minister or church in their admissions ever proceeded on the supposition, that all whom they took into communion were so versed in this controversy, as this comes to? Has it ever been the manner in examining them as to the sufficiency of their *knowledge*, to examine them as to their thorough acquaintance with this particular controversy? Has it been the manner to put by those who had only an opinion and not a certainty; even as the *priests* who could not find their *register*, were put by, till the matter could be determined by Urim and Thummim? And I dare appeal to every minister, and every member of a church that has been concerned in admitting communicants, whether they ever imagined, or it ever entered into their thought, concerning each one whose admission they have consented to, that they had looked so much into this matter, as not only to have settled their *opinion*, but to be arrived to a proper *certainty*?

(2.) I desire it may be remembered, the venerable author of the *Appeal to the Learned*, did in his ministry ever teach such doctrine from whence it will unavoidably follow, that no one *unconverted* man in the world can *know* he has warrant to come to the Lord's supper. For if any unconverted man has warrant to worship his Maker in this way, it must be because God has given him warrant by the revelation of his *mind in* the Holy Scriptures. And therefore if any unconverted man, not only thinks, but knows, he has warrant from God, he must of consequence, not only think, but know, that the scriptures are the word of God. But I believe all that survive of the stated hearers of that eminent divine, and all who are acquainted with him, well remember it to be a doctrine which he often taught and much insisted on, that no natural man *knows* the scripture to be the word of God; that although such may *think* so, yet they do not *know* it; and that at best they have but a *doubtful opinion*: And he often would express himself thus; *No natural man is thoroughly convinced, that the scriptures are the word of God; if they were convinced, they would be gained.* Now if so, it is impossible any natural man in the world should ever *know*, it is his right, in his present condition

to come to the Lord's supper. True, he may think it is his right, he may have that opinion; but he cannot *know* it; and so must not come, according to this argument. For it is only the *word of God* in the Holy Scriptures, that gives a man a *right* to worship the Supreme Being in this sacramental manner, and to come to him in this way, or any other, as one in covenant with him. The Lord's supper being no branch of natural worship, reason without institution is no ground of duty or right in this affair. And hence it is plainly impossible for those that do not so much as *know* the scriptures are the word of God, to *know* they have any good ground of duty or right in this matter. Therefore, supposing unconverted men have a real right, yet since they have no *known* right, they have no warrant (according to the argument before us) to take and use their right; and what good then can their right do them? Or how can they excuse themselves from presumption, in claiming a *right*, which they do not *know* belongs to them? It is said, a *probable hope* that persons are regenerate, will not warrant them to come; if they come, they take a liberty to do that which they do not *know* God gives them leave to do, which is horrible presumption in them. But if this be good arguing, I may as well say, a *probable opinion* that unregenerate men may communicate, will not warrant such to do it. They must have *certain* knowledge of this; else, their *right* being uncertain, they run a dreadful venture in coming.

Answ. II. Men are liable to doubt concerning their *moral sincerity*, as well as saving grace. If an unconverted man, sensible of his being under the reigning power of sin, was about to appear solemnly to *own the covenant* (as it is commonly called) and to profess to give up himself to the service of God in an universal and persevering obedience; and at the same time knew, that if he did this, and sealed this profession at the Lord's supper, without *moral sincerity* (supposing him to understand the meaning of that phrase) he should *eat and drink judgment* to himself; and if accordingly, his conscience being awakened, he was *afraid of God's judgment*; in this case, I believe the man would be every whit as liable to doubts-

about his *moral sincerity*, as godly men are about their gracious sincerity. And if it be not matter of fact, that natural men are so often exercised and troubled with doubts about their *moral sincerity*, as godly men are about their regeneration, I suppose it to be owing only to this cause, viz. that godly men being of more tender consciences than those under the dominion of sin, are more afraid of God's judgments, and more ready to tremble at his word. The divines on the other side of the question, suppose it to be requisite, that communicants should believe the fundamantal doctrines of religion *with all their heart* (in the sense of Acts viii. 37.) the doctrine of *Three Persons and One God*, in particular: But I think there can be no reasonable doubt, that natural men, who have so weak and poor a kind of faith in these mysteries, if they were indeed as much afraid of the terrible consequences of their being deceived in this matter, or being not morally sincere in their profession of the truth, as truly gracious men are wont to be of delusion concerning their experience of a work of grace, or whether they are evangelically sincere in choosing God for their portion; the former would be as frequently exercised with doubts in the one case, as the latter in the other. And I very much question, whether any divine on the other side of the controversy would think it necessary, that natural men in professing those things should mean that they *know* they are *morally sincere*, or intend any more than that they trust they have that sincerity, so far as they know their own hearts. If a man should come to them, proposing to join with the church, and tell them, though indeed he was something afraid whether he believed the doctrine of the Trinity *with all his heart* (meaning in a moral sense) yet that he had often examined himself as to that matter with the utmost impartiality and strictness he was capable of, and on the whole he found reasons of probable hope, and his preponderating thought of himself was, that he was sincere in it; would they think such an one ought to be rejected, or would they advise him not to come to the sacrament, because he did not certainly *know* he had this sincerity, but only *thought* he had it!

Answ. III. If we suppose sanctifying grace to be requisite in order to a being properly qualified, according to God's word, for an attendance on the Lord's supper; yet it will not follow, that a man must *know* he has this qualification, in order to his being capable of *conscientiously* attending it. If he *judges* that he has it, according to the best light he can obtain, on the most careful examination, with the improvement of such helps as he can get, the advice of his pastor, &c. he may be bound in conscience to attend. And the reason is this; Christians partaking of the Lord's supper is not a matter of mere *claim*, or *right* and *privilege*, but a matter of *duty* and *obligation*; being an affair wherein another (even God) has a claim and *demand on us*. And as we ought to be careful, on the one hand, that we proceed on good grounds in taking to ourselves a privilege, lest we take what we have no good claim to; so we should be equally careful, on the other hand, to proceed on good grounds in what we withhold from another, lest we do not withhold that from him which is his due, and which he justly challenges from us. Therefore in a case of this complex nature, where a thing is both a matter of *right* or *privilege* to us and also a matter of *obligation* to another, or a *right* of his from us, the danger of proceeding *without* right and truth is equal both ways; and consequently if we cannot be absolutely sure either way, here the best judgment we can form, after all proper endeavors to know the truth, must govern and determine us; otherwise we shall designedly do that whereby, according to our own judgment, we run the greatest risk; which is certainly contrary to reason. If the question were only what a man has a *right to*, he might forbear till he were sure: But the question is, not only whether *he* has a right to attend the supper, but whether *God* also has not a right to his attendance there? Supposing it were merely a privilege which I am allowed in a certain specified case, and there were no command to take the Lord's supper even in that case, but yet at the same time there was a command *not* to take *unless that be the case* in fact, then, supposing I am uncertin *whether that be the case with me or no*, it will be safest to abstain: But supposing I am not only forbidden to take it, unless that be

the case with me, but positively commanded and required to take it, if that be the case in fact, then it is equally dangerous to *neglect* on uncertainties, as to *take* on uncertainties. In such a critical situation, a man must act according to the best of his judgment on his case; otherwise he wilfully runs into that which he thinks the greatest danger of the two.

Thus it is in innumerable cases in human life. I shall give one plain instance: A man ought not to take upon him the work of the ministry unless called to it in the providence of God; for a man has no right to *take this honor to himself, unless called of God.* Now let us suppose a young man of a liberal education, and well accomplished, to be at a loss whether it is the will of God that he should follow the work of the ministry; and he examines himself, and examines his circumstances, with great seriousness and solemn prayer, and well considers and weighs the appearances in divine providence: And yet when he has done all, he has not come to a proper certainty that God calls him to this work; but however it looks so to him, according to the best light he can obtain, and the most careful judgment he can form: Now such a one appears *obliged in conscience* to give himself to this work. He must by no means neglect it under a notion that he must not *take this honor to himself*, till he *knows* he has a *right* to it; because though it be indeed a *privilege*, yet it is not a matter of mere privilege, but a matter of duty too; and if he neglects it *under these circumstances*, he neglects what, according to his own best judgment, he *thinks* God requires of him, and calls him to; which is to sin against his *conscience*.

As to the case of the *priests*, that could not find their *register* (Ezra ii.) alleged in *the Appeal to the Learned*, p. 64, it appears to me of no force in this argument; for if those *priests* had had never so great *assurance* in themselves of their pedigree being good, or of their being descended from *priests*, and should have *professed* such assurance, yet it would not have availed; nor did they abstain from the *priesthood*, because they wanted satisfaction themselves, but they were subject to the judgment of the *Sanhedrim*; whose rule to judge of the qualification spoken of, God had never made any pro-

fession of the parties themselves, but the visibility of the thing, and evidence of the fact to their own eyes: This matter of *pedigree* being an external object, ordinarily within the view of man; and not any qualification of heart. But this is not the case with regard to requisite qualifications for the *Lord's supper*, which being many of them internal, invisible things, seated in the mind and heart, such as the *belief* of a Supreme Being, &c; God has made a credible *profession* of these things the rule to direct in admission of persons to the ordinance: Who, in making this profession, are determined and governed by their own judgment of themselves, and not by any thing within the view of the church.

## OBJECTION X.

THE natural consequence of the doctrine which has been maintained, is the bringing multitudes of persons of a *tender conscience* and true piety into great *perplexities*; who, being at a loss about the state of their souls, must needs be as much in suspence about their duty: And it is not reasonable to suppose, that God would order things so in the revelations of his will, as to *bring his own people into such perplexities*.

Answ. I. It it for *want* of the like tenderness of conscience which the godly have, that the other doctrine which insists on *moral sincerity*, does not naturally bring those who are received to communion on those principles, into the same *perplexities*, through their doubting of their *moral sincerity*, of their believing mysteries *with all their heart*, &c. as has been already observed. And a being *free* from perplexity, only through *stupidity* and hardness of heart, is *worse* than being in the greatest perplexity through tenderness of conscience.

Answ. II. Supposing the doctrine which I have maintained, be indeed the doctrine of *God's word*, yet it will not follow, that the *perplexities* true saints are in through doubting of their state, are effects owing to the *revelations of God's*

*word.* Perplexity and distress of mind, not only on occasion of the Lord's supper, but innumerable other occasions, is the natural and unavoidable consequence of true Christians *doubting of their state.* But shall we therefore say, that all these perplexities are owing to the *word of God?* No, it is not owing to God, nor to any of his revelations, that true saints ever doubt of their state; his revelations are plain and clear, and his rules sufficient for men to determine their own condition by: But, for the most part, it is owing to their own *sloth*, and giving way to their *sinful* dispositions. Must God's institutions and revelations be answerable for all the perplexities men bring on themselves, through their own negligence and unwatchfulness? It is wisely ordered it should be so, that the saints should escape perplexity in no other way than that of a great strictness, diligence, and maintaining the lively, laborious, and selfdenying exercises of religion.

It might as well be said, that it is unreasonable to suppose, God should order things so as to bring his own people into such perplexities, as doubting saints are wont to be exercised with in the sensible approaches of *death;* when their doubts tend to vastly greater *perplexity*, than in their approaches to the Lord's table. If Christians would more thoroughly *exercise themselves unto godliness*, laboring always to *keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man*, it would be the way to have the comfort, and taste the sweetness of religion. If they would *so run, not as uncertainly; so fight, not as they that beat the air;* it would be the way for them to escape perplexity, both in ordinances and providences, and to rejoice and enjoy God in both. Not but that doubting of their state sometimes arises from other causes, besides want of watchfulness; it may arise from melancholy, and some other peculiar disadvantages. But however, it is not owing to God's revelations nor institutions; which, whatsoever we may suppose them to be, will not prevent the perplexities of *such* persons.

Answer III. It appears to me reasonable to suppose, that the doctrine I maintain, if *universally* embraced by God's people, however it might be an accidental occasion of *perplexity*

in many instances, through their own infirmity and sin; yet, on the whole, would be a happy occasion of much more comfort to the saints than trouble, as it would have a tendency, on every return of the Lord's supper, to put them on the strictest examination and trial of the state of their souls, agreeable to that rule of the apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 28. The *neglect* of which great duty of frequent and thorough *selfexamination*, seems to be one main cause of the darkness and perplexity of the saints, and the reason why they have so little comfort in ordinances, and so little comfort in general. Mr. Stoddard often taught his people, that *assurance* is *attainable*, and that those who are true saints might know it, if they would; i. e. if they would use proper means and endeavors in order to it. And if so, then certainly it is not just, to charge those perplexities on *God's institutions*, which arise through *men's negligence*; nor would it be just on the supposition of God's institutions being such as I suppose them to be.

## OBJECTION XI.

YOU may as well say, that unsanctified persons may not attend *any* duty of divine worship whatsoever, as that they may not attend the Lord's supper; for all duties of worship are *holy* and *require holiness*, in order to an acceptable performance of them, as well as that.

ANSWER. If this argument has any foundation at all, it has its foundation in the supposed truth of the following *propositions*, viz. *Whosoever is qualified for admission to one duty of divine worship, is qualified for admission to all*; and *he that is unqualified for one, and may be forbidden one, is unqualified for all, and ought to be allowed to attend none.* But certainly these propositions are not true. There are many who are *qualified* for some duties of worship, and may be *allowed*, and are by no means to be *forbidden* to attend them, who yet are *not* qualified for some others, nor by any means to be admitted

to them. As every body grants, the unbaptized, the excommunicated, heretics, scandalous livers, &c. may be admitted to hear the *word* preached; nevertheless they are not to be allowed to come to the Lord's supper. Even excommunicated persons remain still under the law of the Sabbath, and are not to be forbidden to observe the Lord's day. Ignorant persons, such as have not knowledge sufficient for an approach to the Lord's table, yet are not excused from the duty of prayer: They may pray to God to instruct them, and assist them in obtaining knowledge. They who have been educated in Arianism and Socinianism, and are not yet brought off from these fundamental error, and so are by no means to be admitted to the Lord's supper, yet may pray to God to assist them in their studies, and guide them into the truth, and for all other mercies which they need. Socrates, that great Gentile philosopher, who worshipped the true God, as he was led by the light of nature, might pray to God, and he attended his duty when he did so; although he knew not the revelation which God had made of himself in his word. That great philosopher that was contemporary with the Apostle Paul, I mean Seneca, who held one Supreme Being, and had, in many respects right notions of the divine perfections and providence, though he did not embrace the gospel, which at that *day* was preached in the world; yet might pray to that Supreme Being whom he acknowledged. And if his brother Gallio at Corinth, when Paul preached there, had prayed to this Supreme Being to guide him into the truth, that he might know whether the doctrine Paul preached was true, he therein would have acted very becoming a reasonable creature, and any one would have acted unreasonably in forbidding him; but yet surely neither of these men was qualified for the Christian sacraments. So that it is apparent, there is and ought to be a distinction made between duties of worship, with respect to qualifications for them; and that which is a sufficient qualification for admission to one duty, is not so for all. And therefore the position is not true, which is the foundation whereon the whole weight of this argument rests. To say that although it be true there ought to be a distinction made,

in admission to duties of worship, with regard to some qualifications, yet sanctifying grace is not one of those qualifications that make the difference; would be but a giving up the argument, and a perfect begging the question.

It is said, there can be no reason assigned, why unsanctified persons may attend *other* duties of worship and not the *Lord's supper*. But I humbly conceive this must be an inadvertence. For there is a reason very obvious from that necessary and very notable *distinction* among duties of worship which follows:

1. There are *some duties* of worship, that imply a *profession of God's covenant*; whose very nature and design is an exhibition of those vital active principles and inward exercises, wherein consists the *condition of the covenant of grace*, or that union of soul to God, which is the union between Christ and his spouse, entered into by an inward, hearty consenting to that covenant. Such are the Christian *sacraments*, whose very design is to make and confirm a *profession* of compliance with that covenant, and whose very nature is to exhibit or express the uniting acts of the soul: Those sacramental duties therefore cannot, by any whose hearts do not really consent to that covenant, and whose souls do not truly close with Christ, be attended without either their being selfdeceived, or else wilfully making a false profession, and lying in a very aggravated manner.

2. There are *other duties*, which are *not* in their own nature an exhibition of a covenant union with God, or of any compliance with the condition of the *covenant of grace*; but are the expression of *general virtues*, or virtues in their largest extent, including both special and common. Thus, *prayer* or asking mercy of God, is in its own nature *no* profession of a compliance with the *covenant* of grace: It is an expression of some belief of the being of a God, an expression of some sense of our wants, some sense of our need of help, and some sense of a need of God's help, some sense of our dependance, &c. but not only such a sense of these things as is spiritual and saving. Indeed there are some prayers proper to be made by *saints*, and many things proper to be expressed by

them in prayer, which imply the profession of a spiritual union of heart to God through Christ; but such as no Heathen, no heretic, nor natural man whatever, can or ought to make. Prayer in general, and asking mercy and help from God is no more a profession of consent to the *covenant* of grace, than reading the Scriptures, or meditation, or performing any duty of morality and natural religion. A Mahometan may as well ask mercy as hear instruction: And any natural man may as well express his desires to God, as hear when God declares his will to him. It is true, when an unconverted man prays, the *manner* of his doing it is sinful: But when a natural man, knowing himself to be so, comes to the Lord's supper, the very *matter* of what he does, in respect of the profession he there makes, and his pretension to lay hold of God's covenant, is a *lie*, and a lie told in the most solemn manner.

In a word, the venerable Mr. Stoddard himself, in his *Doctrine of Instituted Churches*, has taught us to distinguish between *instituted* and *natural* acts of religion: The *word* and *prayer* he places under the head of moral duty, and considers as *common* to all; but the sacraments, according to what he says there, being *instituted*, are of *special* administration, and must be *limited* agreeable to the institution.

## OBJECTION XII.

THE Lord's supper has a proper *tendency* to promote men's *conversion*, being an affecting representation of the greatest and most important things of God's word: It has a proper *tendency* to awaken and humble sinners; here being a discovery of the terrible anger of God for sin, by the infliction of the curse upon Christ, when sin was imputed to him; and the representation here made of the dying love of Christ has a tendency to draw the hearts of sinners from sin to God, &c.

Answ. Unless it be an evident truth, that *what the Lord's supper may have tendency to promote, the same it was appointed to promote*, nothing follows from this argument. If the argument affords any consequence, the consequence is built on the *tendency* of the Lord's supper. And if the consequence be good and strong on this foundation, as drawn from such premises, then wherever the *premises hold*, the *consequence* holds; otherwise it must appear, that the *premises* and *consequence* are not connected. And now let us see how it is in *fact*. Do not *scandalous* persons need to have these very effects wrought in their hearts, which have been mentioned? Yes, surely; they need them in a special manner: They need to be awakened; they need to have an affecting discovery of that terrible wrath of God against sin, which was manifested in a peculiar manner by the terrible effects of God's wrath in the sufferings of his own incarnate Son: Gross sinners need this in some respect more than others: They need to have their hearts broken by an affecting view of the great and important things of God's word: They need especially to fly to Christ for refuge, and therefore need to have their hearts drawn. And seeing the *Lord's supper* has so great a *tendency* to promote these things, if the consequence from the *tendency* of the Lord's supper, as inferring the end of its *appointment* be good, then it must be a consequence also well inferred, that the Lord's supper was appointed for the reclaiming and bringing to repentance *scandalous* persons.

Here, for any to go to turn this off, by saying, *Scandalous persons are expressly forbid*, is but a giving up the argument, and a begging the question. It is a giving up the argument; since it allows the *consequence* not to be good. For it allows, that notwithstanding the proper *tendency* of the Lord's supper to promote a design, yet it may be so that the Lord's supper was not appointed with a view to promote that end. And it is a begging the question; since it supposes, that *unconverted men are not evidently forbidden*, as well as scandalous persons; which is the thing in controversy. If they be *evidently* forbid, that is as much to reasonable creatures (who need nothing but good evidence) as if they were expressly forbidden.

To say here, that the *Lord's supper is a converting ordinance only to orderly members* and that *there is another ordinance appointed for bringing scandalous persons to repentance*, this is no solution of the difficulty; but it is only another instance of yielding up the argument and begging the question: For it plainly concedes, that the *tendency* of an ordinance does not prove it *appointed* to all the ends, which it seems to have a tendency to promote: And also supposes, that there is not any *other* ordinance, appointed for the converting of sinners that are moral and orderly in their lives, *exclusive of this*, which is the thing in question.

It is at best but very precarious arguing, from the seeming *tendency* of things, to the *divine appointment*, or God's will and disposition with respect to the *use* of those things. It looks as though it would have had a great *tendency* to convince the Scribes and Pharisees, and to promote their conversion if they had been admitted into the Mount when Christ was *transfigured*: But yet it was not the will of Christ, that they should be admitted there, or any other but Peter, James and John. It seems as though it would have had a very great *tendency* to convince and bring to repentance the unbelieving Jews, if they had been allowed to see and converse freely with Christ after his *resurrection*, and see him *ascend* into heaven: But yet it was the will of God, that none but *disciples* should be admitted to these privileges. So it seems as though it might have had a good tendency, if *all* that were sincere followers of Christ, women as well as men, had been allowed to be *present* at the institution of the *Lord's supper*: But yet it is commonly thought none were admitted beside the *Apostles*.

Indeed the ever honored author of the *Appeal to the Learned* has supplied me with the true and proper answer to this objection, in the following words, p. 27, 28. "The efficacy of the Lord's supper does depend upon the blessing of God. *Whatever* TENDENCY *ordinances have in their* OWN NATURE *to be serviceable* to men, yet they will not prevail any further than God doth bless them. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*, 2 Cor. x. 4. It is God that teaches men

to profit, and makes them profitable and serviceable to men's souls. There is reason to hope for a divine blessing on the *Lord's supper*, when it is administered to those that it *ought* to be administered to: God's *blessing* is to be expected in God's *way*. If men act according to their own humors and fancies, and do not keep in the way of *obedience*, it is presumption to expect God's blessing, Matth. xv. 9. *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* But when *they* are admitted to the Lord's supper that *God would have to be* admitted, there is ground to hope that he will make it profitable."

## OBJECTION XIII.

ALL that are members of the *visible church* and in the *external covenant*, and neither ignorant nor scandalous, are commanded to perform all *external covenant duties*; and particularly they are commanded to attend the *Lord's supper*, in those words of Christ, *This do in remembrance of me.*

Answ. This argument is of no force, without first taking for granted the very thing in question. For this is plainly supposed in it, that however these commands are given to such as are in the *external covenant*, yet they are not given indefinitely, but with exceptions and reserves, and do not immediately reach *all* such; they do not reach those who are *unqualified*, though they be in the external covenant. Now the question is, *Who* are these that are *unqualified?* The objection supposes, that only ignorant and scandalous persons are so. But *why* are they only supposed unqualified; and not *unconverted* persons too? Because it is taken for granted, that these are *not* unqualified. And thus the grand point in question is supposed, instead of being proved. Why are these limitations only singled out, *neither ignorant nor scandalous*; and not others as well? The answer must be, because these are *all* the limitations which the scripture makes: But this now is the

very thing in question. Whereas the business of an argument is to *prove*, and not to suppose, or take for granted, the very thing which is to be proved.

If it be here said, it is with good reason that those who are ignorant or scandalous alone are supposed to be excepted in God's command, and obligations of the covenant; for the covenant spoken of in the objection, is the *external covenant*, and this requires only *external duties*; which alone are what lie within the reach of man's natural power, and so in the reach of his legal power: God does not command or require what men have no natural power to perform, and which cannot be performed before something else, some antecedent duty, is performed, which antecedent duty is not in their natural power.

I reply, Still things are but *supposed*, which should be proved, and which want confirmation.

(1.) It is *supposed* that those who have *externally* (i. e. by oral profession and promise) entered into God's covenant, are thereby obliged to no more than the external duties of that covenant: Which is not proved, and I humbly conceive, is certainly not the true state of the case. They who have *externally* entered into God's covenant, are by external profession and engagements entered into that one only *covenant of grace*, which the scripture informs us of; and therefore are obliged to fulfil the duties of *that* covenant, which are chiefly *internal*. The children of Israel, when they *externally* entered into covenant with God at Mount Sinai, promised to perform all the duties of the covenant, to obey all the ten commandments spoken by God in their hearing, and written in tables of stone, which were therefore called *The Tables of the covenant*; the sum of which ten commandments was, *to* LOVE *the Lord their God with all their* HEART, *and with all their* SOUL, *and to* LOVE *their neighbor as themselves*; which, principally at least, are *internal* duties. In particular, they promised *not to covet*; which is an *internal* duty. They promised to *have no other God before the Lord*; which implied that they would in their hearts regard no other being or object whatever above God, or in equality with him, but would give him their supreme respect.

(2.) It is *supposed*, that God does not *require impossibilities* of men, in this sense, that he does not require those things of them which are out of their *natural* power and particularly that he does not require them to be *converted*. But this is not proved; nor can I reconcile it with the tenor of the scripture revelation: And the chief advocates for the doctrine I oppose have themselves abundantly asserted the contrary. The venerable author forementioned, as every body knows, that knew him, always taught, that God justly requires men to be *converted*, to repent of their sins, and turn to the Lord, to close with Christ, and savingly to believe in him; and that in refusing to accept of Christ and turn to God, they disobeyed the divine commands, and were guilty of the most heinous sin; and that their moral inability was no excuse.

(3.) It is *supposed*, that God does not command men to do those things which are not to be done till *something else* is done, that is not within the reach of men's natural ability. This also is not proved; nor do I see how it can be true, even according to the principles of those who insist on this objection. The forementioned memorable divine ever taught, that God commandeth natural men without delay to *believe* in Christ: And yet he always held, that it was impossible for them to believe till they had by a preceding act submitted to the sovereignty of God; which yet he held, men never could do of *themselves*, nor till humbled and bowed by powerful convictions of God's Spirit. Again, he taught, that God commandeth natural men to love him with all their heart: And yet he held, that this could not be till men had first *believed* in Christ; the exercise of love being a fruit of faith; and believing in Christ, he supposed not to be within the reach of man's *natural* ability. Further, he held, that God requireth of all men holy, spiritual, and acceptable *obedience*; and yet that such obedience is not within the reach of their *natural ability*; and not only so, but that there must first be *love* to God, before there could be new obedience, and that this love to God is not within the reach of men's *natural ability*: Nor yet only so, but that before this love there must be *faith*, which faith is not within the reach of man's natural power: And still

not only so, but that before faith there must be the *knowledge* of God, which knowledge is not in *natural* men's reach : And once more, not only so, but that even before the knowledge of God there must be a thorough *humiliation*, which humiliation men could not work in themselves by any natural power of their own. Now must it needs be thought, notwithstanding all these things, *unreasonable* to suppose, that God should *command* those whom he has nourished and brought up, to honor him by giving an open testimony of love to him ; only because wicked men cannot *testify* love till they *have* love, and love is not in their natural power ! And is it any good excuse in the sight of God, for one who is under the highest obligations to him, and yet refuses him suitable honor by openly testifying his love of him, to plead that he has no love to testify ; but on the contrary, has an infinitely unreasonable hatred ? God may most reasonably require a proper testimony and profession of love to him ; and yet it may also be reasonable to suppose at the same time, he forbids men to lie ; or to declare that they have love, when they have none : Because, though it be supposed, that God requires men to testify love to him, yet he requires them to do it in a right way, and in the true order, viz. first *loving* him, and then *testifying* their love.

(4.) I do not see how it can be true, that a man, as he is naturally, has not a *legal* power to be converted, accept of Christ, love God, &c. By a *legal power* to do a thing, is plainly meant such power as brings a person properly within the reach of a *legal obligation*, or the obligation of a law or command to do that thing : But he that has such natural faculties, as render him a proper subject of moral government, and as speak it a fit and proper thing for him to love God, &c. and as give him a natural capacity herefor ; such a one may properly be *commanded*, and put under the obligation of a *law* to do things so reasonable ; notwithstanding any native aversion and moral inability in him to do his duty, arising from the power of sin. This also, I must observe, was a known doctrine of Mr. Stoddard's and what he ever taught.

## OBJECTION XIV.

EITHER *unsanctified* persons may lawfully come to the Lord's supper, or it is unlawful for them to *carry themselves as saints*; but it is not unlawful for them to carry themselves as saints.

ANSW. It is the duty of unconverted men, both to become saints, and to behave as saints. The scripture rule is, *Make the tree good, that the fruit may be good.* Mr. Stoddard himself never supposed, that the fruit of *saints* was to be expected from men, or could possibly be brought forth by them in truth, till they *were* saints.

And I see not how it is true, that unconverted men ought, in every respect, to do those external things which it is the duty of a godly man to do. It is the duty of a godly man, conscious of his having given his heart unto the Lord, to profess his love to God and his esteem of him above all, his unfeigned faith in Christ, &c. and in his closet devotions to thank God for these graces as the fruit of the Spirit in him: But it is not the duty of another that really has no faith, nor love to God, to do thus. Neither any more is it a natural man's duty to profess these things in the *Lord's supper*. Mr. Stoddard taught it to be the duty of converts on many occasions, to profess their faith and love and other graces *before men* by relating their *experiences* in conversation: But it would be great wickedness for such as know themselves to be not *saints*, thus to do: Because they would speak falsely, and utter lies in so doing. Now, for the like reason, it would be very sinful, for men to profess and seal their consent to the covenant of grace in the Lord's supper, when they know at the same time that they do *not* consent to it, nor have their hearts at all in the affair.

## OBJECTION XV.

THIS scheme will *keep out* of the church some *true saints*; for there are some such who determine against themselves, and their prevailing judgment is, that they are *not* saints: And we had better let in several hypocrites, than exclude one true child of God.

Answ. I think, it is much better to insist on some *visibility* to reason, of true *saintship*, in admitting members, even although this, through men's infirmity and darkness, and Satan's temptations, be an occasion of some true saints' abstaining; than by express liberty given, to open the door to as many as please, of those who have no visibility of real saintship, and make no profession of it, nor pretension to it; and that because this method tends to the ruin and great reproach of the Christian church, and also to the ruin of the persons admitted.

1. It tends to the reproach and ruin of the Christian church. *For by the rule which God hath given for admissions, if it be carefully attended* (it is said) MORE *unconverted, than converted persons will be admitted.* It is then confessedly the way to have the greater part of the members of the Christian church *ungodly* men; yea, so much greater, that the godly shall be but *few* in comparison of the ungodly; agreeable to their interpretation of that saying of Christ, *many are called but few are chosen.* Now if this be an exact state of the case, it will demonstrably follow, on scripture principles, that the opening the door so wide has a direct tendency to bring things to that pass, that the far greater part of the members of Christian churches shall not be persons of so much as a serious conscientious character, but such as are without even *moral sincerity*, and do not make religion at all their business, neglecting and casting off secret prayer and other duties, and living a life of carnality and vanity, so far as they can, consistently with avoiding church censures; which possibly may be sometimes to a great degree. Ungodly men may be morally

sober, serious and conscientious, and may have what is called *moral sincerity*, for a while; may have these things in a considerable measure, when they first come into the church: But if their hearts are not changed, there is no probability at all of these things continuing long. The scripture has told us, that this *their goodness* is apt to vanish *like the morning cloud and early dew*. How can it be expected but that the religion should in a little time wither away, which has *no root?* How can it be expected, that the *lamp* should burn long, without *oil in the vessel* to feed it? If lust be unmortified, and left in reigning power in the heart, it will sooner or later prevail; and at length sweep away *common grace* and *moral sincerity*, however excited and maintained for a while by conviction and temporary affections. It will happen to them according to the true proverb, *The dog is returned to his vomit; and the swine that was washed to his wallowing in the mire.* It is said of the hypocrite, *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?* And thus our churches will be likely to be such congregations as the Psalmist said he hated, and *would not sit with.* Psal. xxvi. 4, 5. "I have not sat with vain persons, nor will I go in with dissemblers; I have hated the congregation of evil doers, nor will I sit with the wicked." This will be the way to have the Lord's table ordinarily furnished with such guests as allow themseves to live in known sin, and so such as meet together from time to time only to crucify Christ afresh, instead of commemorating his crucifixion with the repentance, faith, gratitude, and love of friends. And this is the way to have the governing part of the church such as are not even conscientious men, and are careless about the honor and interest of religion. And the direct tendency of that is, in process of time, to introduce a prevailing negligence in discipline and carelessness in seeking ministers of a pious and worthy character. And the next step will be the churches being filled with persons openly vicious in manners, or else scandalously erroneous in opinions: It is well if this be not already the case in fact with some churches that have long professed and practiced on the principles I oppose. And if these principles should be professed and proceeded on by

person's own solemn profession of innocency, his asserting it upon *oath*, shall be the condition of acquittance and impunity; and the want of such a protestation or profession shall expose him to the punishment: And yet by an abuse of these rules, in some instances, the horrid sin of deliberate *perjury*, or that most presumptuous wickedness of false swearing, shall be the very thing that acquits a man: While another of a more tender conscience, who *fears an oath*, must suffer the penalty of the law.

2. Those rules, by all wise lawgivers, are accounted wholesome, which prove of *general* good tendency, notwithstanding any bad consequences arising in some particular instances. And as to the ecclesiastical rule now in question, of admission to sacraments on a *profession* of *godliness*, when attended with requisite circumstances; although this rule in particular instances may be an occasion of some *tender hearted* Christians *abstaining*, and some *presumptuous* sinners being admitted, yet that does not hinder but that a proper visibility of holiness to the eye of reason, or a probability of it in a judgment of rational Christian charity, may this way be maintained, as the proper qualification of candidates for admission: Nor does it hinder but that it may be reasonable and wholesome for mankind, in their outward conduct, to regulate themselves by such probability; and that this should be a reasonable and good rule for the church to regulate themselves by in their admissions; notwithstanding its so happening in particular instances, that things are *really* diverse from, yea the very reverse of, what they are visibly. Such a *profession* as has been insisted on, when attended with *requisite circumstances*, carries in it a rational credibility in the judgment of Christian charity: For it ought to be attended with an honest and sober character, and with evidences of good doctrinal knowledge, and with all proper, careful, and diligent instructions of a prudent pastor: And though the pastor is not to act as a *searcher of the heart*, or a *lord of conscience* in this affair, yet that hinders not but that he may and ought to inquire particularly into the experiences of the souls committed to his care and charge, that he may be under the best advantages to in-

struct and advise them, to apply the teachings and rules of God's word unto them, for their selfexamination, to be *helpers of their joy*, and promoters of their salvation. However, finally, not any pretended extraordinary skill of *his* in discerning the heart, but the person's *own* serious profession concerning what he finds in his own soul, after he has been well instructed, must regulate the public conduct with respect to him, where there is no other external visible thing to contradict and overrule it: And a serious profession of godliness, under these circumstances, carries in it a visibility to the eye of the church's rational and Christian judgment.

3. If it be still insisted on, that a *rule* of admission into the church cannot be *good*, which is liable to such a kind of *abuse* as that forementioned, I must observe, This will overthrow the rules that the *objectors* themselves go by in their admissions. For they insist upon it, that a man must not only have knowledge and be free of scandal, but must appear *orthodox*, and profess the common faith. Now *presumptuous lying*, for the sake of the honor of being in the church, having children baptized, and voting in ecclesiastical affairs, may possibly be the very thing that brings some men into the church by this rule; while greater *tenderness of conscience* may be the very thing that keeps others out. For instance, a man who secretly in his mind gives no credit to the commonly received doctrine of the *Trinity*, yet may, by pretending an assent to it, and in hypocrisy making a public profession of it, get into the church, when at the same time another that equally disbelieves it, but has a more tender conscience than to allow himself in solemnly telling a lie, may by that very means be kept off from the communion, and lie out of the church.

## OBJECTION XVIII.

IT seems hardly reasonable to suppose, that the only wise God has made men's *opinion of themselves*, and a *profession* of it the term of their admission to church privileges; when we know, that very often the *worst* men have the *highest* opinion of themselves.

Answ. I. It must be granted me, that in fact this is the case, if any proper *profession* at all is expected and required, whether it be of sanctifying grace, or of *moral sincerity*, or any thing else that is *good*: And to be sure, nothing is required to be professed, or is *worthy* to be professed, any further than it is *good*.

Answ. II. If *some* things, by the confession of all, must be *professed* for that very reason, because they are *good*, and of great importance; then certainly it must be owned very unreasonable, to say, that those things wherein true *holiness* consists are *not* to be professed, or that a profession of them should *not* be required, for that same reason, because they are *good*, even in the highest degree, and infinitely the most important and most necessary things of any in the world: And it is unreasonable to say, that it is the less to be expected we should profess sincere friendship to Christ, because friendship to Christ is the most *excellent* qualification of any whatsoever, and the contrary the most odious. How absurd is it to say this, merely under a notion that for a man to profess what is so good, and so reasonable, is to profess a *high opinion of himself!*

Answ. III. Though some of the *worst* men are apt to entertain the *highest opinion of themselves*, yet their selfconceit is no *rule* to the church: But the apparent *credibility* of men's *profession* is to be the ground of ecclesiastical proceedings.

## OBJECTION XIX.

IF it be necessary that *adult* persons should make a profession of godliness, in order to their own admission to *baptism*, then undoubtedly it is necessary in order to their *children's* being baptized on their account. For parents cannot convey to their children a right to this sacrament, by virtue of any qualifications *lower* than those requisite in order to their own right: Children being admitted to baptism only as

being as it were parts and members of their parents. And besides, the act of parents in offering up their *children* in a sacrament, which is a seal of the covenant of grace, is in them a solemn attending that sacrament *as* persons *interested* in the covenant, and a public manifestation of their approving and consenting to it, as truly as if they then offered up themselves to God in that ordinance. Indeed it implies a renewed offering up themselves with their children, and devoting both jointly to God in covenant; *themselves*, with their children, as parts of themselves. But now what fearful work will such doctrine make amongst us! We shall have multitudes *unbaptized*, who will go about without the external badge of Christianity, and so in that respect will be like Heathen. And this is the way to have the land full of persons who are destitute of that which is spoken of in Scripture as ordinarily requisite to men's *salvation*; and it will bring a *reproach* on vast multitudes, with the families they belong to: And not only so, but will tend to make them profane and Heathenish; for by thus treating our children, as though *they had no part in the Lord*, we shall *cause them to cease from fearing the Lord*; agreeable to Josh. xxii. 24, 25.

Answ. I. As to children's being destitute of that which is spoken of in Scripture as one thing ordinarily *requisite to salvation*; I would observe, that baptism can do their souls no good any otherwise than through God's blessing attending it: But we have no reason to expect his blessing with baptism, if administered to those that it does *not* belong to by *his institution*.

Answ. II. As to the *reproach*, which will be brought on parents and children, by children's going without baptism, through the parents neglecting a profession of godliness, and so visibly remaining among the unconverted; if any insist on this objection, I think it will savor of much *unreasonableness* and even *stupidity*.

It will savor of an *unreasonable* spirit. Is it not enough, if God freely offers men to own their children and to give them

the honor of baptism, in case the parents will turn from sin and relinquish their enmity against him, heartily give up themselves and their children to him, and take upon them the profession of godliness ?....If men are truly *excusable*, in not turning to God through Christ, in not believing with the heart, and in not confessing with the mouth, why do not we openly plead that they are so ? And why do not we teach sinners, that they are *not to blame* for continuing among the enemies of Christ, and neglecting and despising his great salvation ? If they are not at all excusable in this, and it be wholly owing to their own indulged lusts, that they refuse sincerely to give up themselves and their children to God, then how unreasonable is it for them to complain that their children are denied the honor of having God's mark set upon them as some of his ? If parents are angry at this, such a temper shews them to be very senseless of their own vile treatment of the blessed God. Should a prince send to a traitor in prison, and upon opening the prison doors, make him the offer, that if he would come forth and submit himself to him, he should not only be pardoned himself, but both he and his children should have such and such badges of honor conferred upon them : Yet if the rebel's enmity and stoutness of spirit against his prince is such, that he could not find in his heart to comply with the gracious offer, will he have any cause to be angry, that his children have not those badges of honor given them ? And besides it is very much owing to *parents*, that there are so many *young* people who can make no profession of godliness : They have themselves therefore to blame, if the case be so, that proceeding on the principles which have been maintained, there is like to rise a generation of unbaptized persons. If ancestors had thoroughly done their duty to their posterity, in instructing, praying for, and governing their children, and setting them good examples, there is reason to think, the case would have been far otherwise.

The insisting on this objection would savor of much stupidity. For the objection seems to suppose the country to be full of those that are unconverted, and so exposed every moment to eternal damnation ; yet it seems we do not hear such

great and general complaints and lamentable outcries concerning this. Now why is it looked upon so dreadful, to have great numbers going without the *name* and honorable *badge* of Christianity, that there should be loud and general exclamations concerning such a calamity; when at the same time it is no more resented and laid to heart, that such multitudes go without the *thing*, which is infinitely more dreadful? Why are we so silent about this? What is the *name* good for, without the *thing?* Can parents bear to have their children go about the world in the most odious and dangerous state of soul, in reality, the children of the devil, and condemned *to eternal* burnings; when at the same time they cannot bear to have them disgraced by going without the honor of being *baptized!* An high honor and privilege this is; yet how can parents be contented with the *sign*, exclusive of the thing signified! Why should they covet the external honor for their children, while they are so careless about the spiritual blessing! Does not this argue a senselessness of their own misery, as well as of their children's, in being in a *Christless* state? If a man and his child were both together bitten by a viper, dreadfully swollen, and like to die, would it not argue *stupidity* in the parent, to be anxiously concerned only about his child's having on a dirty garment in such circumstances. and angry at others for not putting some outward ornament upon it? But the difference in this present case is infinitely greater, and more important. Let parents pity their poor children, because they are without baptism; and pity themselves who are in danger of everlasting misery, while they have no interest in the covenant of grace, and so have no right to covenant savors or honors for themselves nor children. No religious honors to be obtained in any other way than by real religion, are much worth contending for. And in truth, it is no honor at all to a man, to have merely the outward badges of a Christian, without being a Christian indeed; any more than it would be an honor to a man that has no learning, but is a mere dunce, to have a degree at College; or than it is for a man who has no valor, but is a grand coward, to have an honorable commission in an army; which only serves, by the

lifting him up, to expose him to the deeper reproach, and sets him forth as the more notable object of contempt.

Answ. III. Concerning the *tendency* of this way of confining baptism to professors of godliness and their children, to promote irreligion and profaneness; I would observe, First, That Christ is best able to *judge* of the tendency of his own *institutions*. Secondly, I am bold to say, that the supposing this principle and practice to have such a tendency, is a great *mistake*, contrary to scripture and plain reason and experience. Indeed such a tendency it would have, to shut men out from having *any part in the Lord* (in the sense of the two tribes and half, Josh. xxii. 25) or to fence them out by such a partition wall as formerly was between Jews and Gentiles; and so to shut them out as to tell them, if they were ever so much disposed to serve God, he was not ready to accept them; according to that notion the Jews seem to have had of the uncircumcised Gentiles. But only to forbear giving men honors they have no title to, and not to compliment them with the name and badge of God's people and children, while they pretend to nothing but what is consistent with their being his enemies, this has no such tendency: But rather the contrary has very much this tendency. For is it not found by constant experience through all ages, that blind, corrupt mankind in matters of religion, are strongly disposed to rest in a *name*, instead of the *thing*; in the shadow, instead of the substance; and to make themselves easy with the former, in the neglect of the latter? This overvaluing of common grace, and *moral sincerity*, as it is called; this building so much upon them, making them the conditions of enjoying the seals of God's covenant, and the appointed privileges, and honorable and sacred badges of God's children; this, I cannot but think, naturally tends to sooth and flatter the pride of vain man, while it tends to aggrandize those things in men's eyes, which they, of themselves, are strongly disposed to magnify and trust in, without such encouragements to prompt them to it, yea against all discouragements and dissuasives that can possibly be used with them.

This way of proceeding greatly tends to establish the negligence of parents, and to confirm the stupidity and security of wicked children. If *baptism* were *denied* to all children, whose parents did not *profess godliness*, and in a judgment of rational charity appear *real saints*, it would tend to excite pious heads of families to more thorough care and pains in the religious education of their children, and to more fervent prayer for them, that they might be converted in youth, before they enter into a married state; and so if they have children, the entail of the covenant be secured. And it would tend to awaken *young people* themselves, as yet unconverted, especially when about to settle in the world. Their having no right to Christian privileges for their children, in case they should become parents, would tend to lead them at such a time seriously to reflect on their own awful state; which, if they do not get out of it, must lay a foundation for so much calamity and reproach to their families. And if, after their becoming parents, they still remain unconverted, the melancholy thought of their children's going about without so much as the external mark of Christians, would have a continual tendency to put them in mind of, and affect them with their own sin and folly in neglecting to turn to God, by which they bring such visible calamity and disgrace on themselves and families: They would have this additional motive continually to stir them up to seek grace for themselves and their children: Whereas the contrary practice has a natural tendency to quiet the minds of persons, both in their own and their children's unregeneracy. Yea, may it not be suspected, that the way of baptizing the children of such as never make any proper profession of godliness, is an expedient originally invented for that very end, to give ease to ancestors with respect to their posterity, in times of general declension and degeneracy?

This way of proceeding greatly tends to establish the stupidity and irreligion of *children*, as well as negligence of parents. It is certain that unconverted parents do never truly give up their children to God; since they do not truly give up themselves to him. And if neither of the parents appear truly pious, in the judgment of rational charity, there is not a

this case any ground to expect that the children will be *brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, or that they will have any thing worthy the name of a Christian education, how solemnly soever the parents may promise it. The faithfulness of Abraham was such as might be trusted in this matter. See Gen. xviii. 19. But men that are not so much as visibly godly, upon what grounds are they to be trusted? How can it be reasonably expected, that they should faithfully bring up their children for GOD, who were never sincerely willing that their children or themselves should be his? And it will be but presumption, to expect that those children who are never given up to God, nor brought up for him, should prove religious and be God's children. There is no manner of reason to expect any other than that such children ordinarily will grow up in irreligion, whether they are baptized or not. And for persons to go about with the name and visible seal of God, and the sacred badge of Christianity upon them, having had their bodies, by a holy ordinance, consecrated to God as his temples, yet living in irreligion and ways of wickedness, this serves exceedingly to harden them, and establish in them an habitual contempt of sacred things. Such persons, above all men are like to be the most hardened and abandoned, and most difficultly reclaimed: As it was with the wicked Jews, who were much more confirmed in their wickedness, than those heathen cities of Tyre and Sidon. To give that which is holy to those who are profane, (or that we have no manner of reason from the circumstances of parentage and education, to expect will be otherwise) is not the way to make them better, but worse: It is the way to have them habitually *trample* holy things *under their feet*, and increase in contempt of them, yea, even to *turn again and rent us*, and be more mischievous and hurtful enemies of that which is good, than otherwise they would be.

## OBJECTION XX.

SOME *ministers* have been greatly *blessed* in the other way of proceeding, and some men have been *converted at the Lord's supper.*

Answ. Though we are to eye the providence of God, and not disregard his works, yet to interpret them to a sense, or apply them to a use inconsistent with the scope of the *word* of God, is a misconstruction and misapplication of them. God has not given us his *providence*, but his *word* to be our governing rule. God is sovereign in his dispensations of providence; he bestowed the blessing on Jacob, even when he had a lie in his mouth; he was pleased to meet with Solomon, and make known himself to him, and bless him in an extraordinary manner, while he was worshipping in an *high place*; he met with Saul, when in a course of violent opposition to him, and out of the way of his duty to the highest degree, going to Damascus to persecute Christ; and even then bestowed the greatest blessing upon him, that perhaps ever was bestowed on a mere man. The conduct of divine providence, with its reasons, is too little understood by us to be improved as our rule. "God has his way in the sea, his path in the mighty waters, and his footsteps are not known: And he gives none account of any of his matters." But God has given us his *word*, to this very end, that it might be our *rule*; and therefore has fitted it to be so; has so ordered it that it may be understood by us. And strictly speaking this is our *only* rule. If we join any thing else to it, as making it our *rule*, we do that which we have no warrant for, yea, that which God himself has forbidden. See Deut. iv. 2. Prov xxx. 6. And with regard to God's blessing and succeeding of ministers, have not some had remarkable experience of it in the way which I plead for, as well as some who have been for the way I oppose? However we cannot conclude, that God sees nothing at all *amiss* in ministers, because he blesses them. In

general, he may see those things in them which are very right and excellent; these he approves and regards, while he overlooks and pardons their mistakes in opinion or practice, and notwithstanding these is pleased to crown their labors with his blessing.

As to the two last arguments in the *Appeal to the Learned*, concerning the subjects of the Christian sacraments, their being members of the *visible* church, and not the *invisible*; the force of those arguments depends entirely on the resolution of that question, Who are *visible saints?* Or what adult persons are regularly admitted to the privileges of members of the *visible church?* Which question has already been largely considered: And, I think, it has been demonstrated that they are those who exhibit a credible profession and visibility of *gospel holiness* or vital piety, and not merely of moral sincerity. So that there is no need of further debating the point in this place.

I might here mention many things not yet taken notice of, which some object as *inconveniences* attending the scheme I have maintained: And if men should set up their own wit and wisdom in opposition to God's revealed will, there is no end of the objections of this kind, which might be raised against any of God's institutions. Some have found great fault even with the *creation* of the world, as being very inconveniently done, and have imagined that they could tell how it might be mended in a great many respects. But however God's altar may appear homely to us, yet if we lift up our tool upon it to mend it we shall pollute it. Laws and institutions are given for the general good, and not to avoid every particular inconvenience. And however it may so happen, that sometimes inconveniences (real or imaginary) may attend the scheme I have maintained; yet, I think, they are in no measure equal to the manifest conveniences and happy tendencies of it, or to the palpable inconveniences and pernicious consequences of the other. I have already mentioned some things of this aspect, and would here briefly observe some other.

Thus, the way of making such a difference between outward duties of *morality* and *worship*, and those great inward duties of the *love of God* and *acceptance of Christ*, that the former must be *visible*, but that there need to be *no exhibition* nor *pretence* of the latter, in order to persons being admitted into the visible family of God; and that under a notion of the latter being *impossibilities*, but the other being *within men's power;* this, I think, has a direct tendency to confirm in men an *insensibility* of the heinousness of those *heart sins* of unbelief and enmity against God our Saviour, which are the source and sum of all wickedness; and tends to prevent their coming under a humbling *conviction* of the greatness and utter inexcusableness of these sins, which men must be brought to if ever they obtain salvation. Indeed it is a way that not only has this tendency but has actually and apparently this effect, and that to a great degree.

The effect of this method of proceeding in the churches in Newengland, which have fallen into it, is actually this. There are some that are received into these churches under the notion of their being in the judgment of rational charity *visible saints* or *professing saints*, who yet at the same time are actually open *professors* of heinous *wickedness;* I mean the wickedness of living in known impenitence and unbelief, the wickedness of living in enmity against God, and in the rejection of Christ under the gospel: Or, which is the same thing, they are such as freely and frequently acknowledge, that they do not profess to be as yet *born again*, but look on themselves as really *unconverted*, as having never unfeignedly accepted of Christ; and they do either explicitly or implicitly number themselves among those that *love not the Lord Jesus Christ;* of whom the apostle says, let such be *Anathema, Maranatha!* And accordingly it is known, all over the town where they live, that they make no pretensions to any *sanctifying grace* already obtained; nor of consequence are they commonly looked upon as any other than *unconverted* persons. Now, can this be judged the comely *order* of the gospel! Or shall God be supposed the *author* of such *confusion!*

In this way of church proceeding, God's own children and the true disciples of Christ are obliged to receive those as their *brethren*, admit them to the *communion of saints*, and embrace them in the highest acts of Christian society, even in their great *feast of love*, where they feed together on the body and blood of Christ, whom yet they have no reason to look upon otherwise than as *enemies of the cross of Christ*, and haters of their heavenly Father and dear Redeemer, they making no pretension to any thing at all inconsistent with those characters; yea, in many places, as I said before, freely professing this to be actually the case with them.

Christ often forbids the members of his church *judging one another:* But in this way of ecclesiastical proceeding, it is done continually, and looked upon as no hurt; a great part of those admitted into the church are by others of the same communion judged *unconverted, graceless* persons; and it is impossible to avoid it, while we stretch not beyond the bounds of a *rational* charity.

This method of proceeding must inevitably have one of these two consequences: Either there must be *no public notice* at all given of it, when so signal a work of grace is wrought, as a sinner's being brought to repent and turn to God, and hopefully becomes the subject of saving conversion; or else this notice must be given in the way of *conversation*, by the *persons themselves*, frequently, freely, and in all companies, declaring their own experiences. But surely, either of these consequences must be very unhappy. The former is so, viz. the forbidding and preventing any *public* notice being given on earth of the *repentance of a sinner*, an event so much to the honor of God, and so much taken notice of in *heaven*, causing *joy in the presence of the angels of God*, and tending so much to the advancement of religion in the world. For it is found by experience, that scarce any one thing has so great an influence to awaken sinners, and engage them to seek salvation, and to quicken and animate saints, as the tidings of a sinner's repentance, or hopeful conversion: God evidently makes use of it as an eminent means of advancing religion in a time of remarkable revival of religion. And to take a course effect-

ually to prevent such an event's being notified on earth, appears to me a counteracting of God, in that which he ever makes use of as a chief means of the propagation of true piety, and which we have reason to think he will make use of as one principal means of the conversion of the world in the glorious latter day. But now as to the *other* way, the way of giving notice to the public of this event, by particular persons *themselves* publishing their own experiences from time to time and from place to place, on all occasions and before all companies, I must confess, this is a practice that appears to me attended with many inconveniences, yea, big with mischiefs. The abundant trial of this method lately made, and the large experience we have had of the evil consequences of it, is enough to put all sober and judicious people for ever out of conceit of it. I shall not pretend to enumerate all the mischiefs attending it, which would be very tedious; but shall now only mention two things. One is, the bad effect it has upon the persons themselves that practice it, in the great tendency it has to spiritual *pride*; insensibly begetting and establishing an evil habit of mind in that respect, by the frequent return of the temptation, and this many times when they are not guarded against it, and have no time, by consideration and prayer, to fortify their minds. And then it has a very bad effect on the minds of *others* that hear their communication, and so on the state of religion in general, in this way: It being thus the custom for persons of all sorts, young and old, wise and unwise, superiors and inferiors, freely to tell their own experiences before all companies, it is commonly done very *injudiciously*, often very rashly and foolishly, out of season, and in circumstances tending to defeat any good end. Even sincere Christians too frequently in their conversation insist mainly on those things that are no part of their *true spiritual experience*; such as impressions on their fancy or imagination, suggestions of facts by passages of scripture, &c.; in which case *children* and weak persons that hear, are apt to form their notions of religion and true piety by such experimental communications, and much more than they do by the most solid and judicious instructions out of the word, they

hear from the pulpit: Which is found to be one of the devices whereby Satan has an inexpressible advantage to ruin the souls of men, and utterly to confound the interest of religion. This matter of making a public profession of godliness or piety of heart, is certainly a very important affair, and ought to be under some *public regulation*, and under the direction of *skilful guides*, and not left to the management of every man, woman, and child, according to their humor or fancy: And when it is done, it should be done with great seriousness, preparation, and prayer, as a solemn act of public respect and honor to God, in his house and in the presence of his people. Not that I condemn, but greatly approve of persons speaking sometimes of their religious experiences in private conversation, to proper persons and on proper occasions, with modesty and discretion, when the glory of God and the benefit or just satisfaction of others require it of them.

In a word, the practice of promiscuous admission, or that way of taking all into the church indifferently as *visible saints*, who are not either ignorant or scandalous, and at the same time that custom's taking place of persons' publishing their own *conversion* in common *conversation*; where these two things meet together, they unavoidably make *two* distinct kinds of *visible churches*, or different bodies of professing saints, one within another, openly distinguished one from another, as it were by a visible dividing line. One company consisting of those who are *visibly gracious* Christians, and open professors of godliness; another consisting of those who are *visibly moral* livers, and only profess common virtues, without pretending to any special and spiritual experiences in their hearts, and who therefore are not reputed to be converts. I may appeal to those acquainted with the state of the churches, whether this be not actually the case in some, where this method of proceeding has been long established. But I leave the judicious reader to make his own remarks on this case, and to determine, whether there be a just foundation in scripture or reason for any such state of things; which to me, I confess, carries the face of glaring absurdity.

And now I commit this whole discourse (under God's blessing) to the reader's candid reflection and impartial judgment. I am sensible, it will be very difficult for many to be truly impartial in this affair; their prejudices being very great against the doctrine which I have maintained. And I believe, I myself am the person, who, above all others upon the face of the earth, have had most in my circumstances to prejudice me against this doctrine, and to make me unwilling to receive conviction of the truth of it. However the clear evidence of God's mind in his word, as things appear to me has constrained me to think and act as I have now done. I dare not go contrary to such texts as those, Lev. x. 10. Jer. xv. 19. Ezek. xxii. 26, and xliv. 6, 7, 8. And having been fully persuaded in my own mind, what is the scripture rule in this matter, after a most careful, painful, and long search, I am willing, in the faithful prosecution of what appears to me of such importance and so plainly the mind and will of God, to resign to his providence, and leave the event in his hand.

It may not be improper to add here as I have often had suggested to me the probability of my being *answered* from the press: If any one shall see cause to undertake this, I have these reasonable requests to make to him, viz. That he would avoid the ungenerous and unmanly artifices used by too many polemic writers, while they turn *aside to vain jangling*, in *carping* at incidental passages, and displaying their wit upon some minute particulars, or less material things, in the author they oppose, with much *exclamation*, if possible to excite the ignorant and unwary readers' disrelish of the author, and to make him appear contemptible, and so to get the victory that way; perhaps dwelling upon and glorying in some pretended inconsistencies in some parts of the discourse, without ever entering thoroughly into the merits of the cause, or closely encountering any of the main arguments. If any one opposes me from the press, I desire he would attend to the true state of the question, and endeavor fairly to take off the force of each argument, by answering the same directly, and distinctly, with calm and close reasoning; avoiding (as much as may be) both dogmatical assertion and passionate reflection.

Sure I am, I shall not envy him the applause of a victory over me, however signal and complete, if only gained by superior light and convincing evidence. I would also request him to set his name to his performance, that I may in that respect stand on even ground with him before the world, in a debate wherein the public is to judge between us. This will be the more reasonable in case he should mingle any thing of accusation with his arguing : It was the manner even of the Heathen Romans, and reputed by them but just and equal, to *have accusers face to face.*

May the God of all grace and peace unite us more in judgment, affection, and practice, that with one heart, and one mouth, we may glorify his name through Jesus Christ. AMEN.

# MISREPRESENTATIONS CORRECTED,

AND

# TRUTH VINDICATED.

IN A REPLY TO THE REV. SOLOMON WILLIAMS'S BOOK, INTITLED "THE TRUE STATE OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO LAWFUL COMMUNION IN THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS."

# PREFACE.

*SINCE I have been so repeatedly charged by Mr. Williams, with indecent and injurious treatment of Mr. Stoddard, (whom doubtless I ought to treat with much respect) I may expect from what appears of Mr. Williams's disposition this way, to be charged with ill treatment of* him *too. I desire therefore that it may be justly considered by the reader, what is, and what is not, injurious or unhandsome treatment of an author in a controversy. And here I would crave leave to say, that I humbly conceive, a distinction ought to be made between opposing and exposing a* cause, *or the* arguments *used to defend it, and reproaching* persons. *He is a weak writer indeed, who undertakes to confute an opinion, but dares not expose the nakedness and absurdity of it, nor the weakness nor inconsistence of the methods taken and arguments used by any to maintain it, for fear he should be guilty of speaking evil of those things, and be charged with reproaching them. If an antagonist is angry at this, he thereby gives his readers too much occasion of suspicion towards himself, as chargeable with weakness, or bitterness.*

*I therefore now give notice, that I have taken full liberty in this respect; only endeavoring to avoid pointed and exaggerating expressions. If to set forth what I suppose to be the true absurdity of Mr. Williams's scheme, or any part of it, that it may be viewed justly in all its nakedness; withal observing the* weakness *of the defence he has made, not fearing to shew wherein it is weak, and how the badness of his cause obliges him to be* inconsistent *with himself, inconsistent with his own professed principles in religion, and with things conceded and asserted by him in the book especially under consideration; and declaring particularly wherein I think his arguments fail, whether it be in* begging the question, *or being impertinent and* beside *the question, or arguing in effect against himself; also observing wherein Mr.*

*Williams has made* misrepresentations *of words or things; I say, if to do these things be reproaching* him, *and injurious treatment of him, then I have injured him. But I think I should be foolish, if I were afraid to do that (and to do it as thoroughly as I can)* which must be the design *of my writing, if I write at all in opposition to his tenets, and to the defence he makes of them.*

*Indeed if I misrepresent what he says, in order to make it appear in the worst colors; altering his words to another sense, to make them appear more ridiculous; or adding other words, that carry the sense beyond the proper import of his words, to heighten the supposed absurdity, and give me greater advantage to exclaim; if I set myself to aggravate matters, and strain them beyond bounds, making mighty things of mere trifles; or if I use exclamations and invectives, instead of arguments; then Mr. Williams might have just cause to complain and the reader would have just reason for disgust. But whether I have done so or not, must be judged by the reader; of whom I desire nothing more than the most impartial and exact consideration of the merits of the cause, and examination of the force and weight of every argument. I desire, that no bitter reproachful invectives, no vehement exclamations, no supercilious assuming words and phrases may be taken for reasoning, on either side. If the reader thinks he finds any such in what I have written, I am willing he should set them aside as nothing worth; carefully distinguishing between them and the strength of the argument. I desire not, that the cause should be judged of by the skill which either Mr. Williams or I do manifest, in flinging one at another.*

*If in places where the argument pinches most, and there is the greatest appearance of strong reason, in Mr. Williams's book, I do (as some other disputants) instead of entering thoroughly into the matter, begin to flounce and fling, and go about to divert and drown the reader's attention to the argument, by the noise of big words, or magisterial and disdainful expressions; let the reader take it (as justly he may) for a shrewd sign of a consciousness of the weakness of my cause in that particular, or at least of a distrust of my own ability to defend myself well in the reader's apprehension, and to come off with a good grace any other way.*

*In this case, I shall not think it any injustice done me by the reader, though he suspects that I feel myself pressed, and begin to be in trouble, for fear I should not seem to come off like a champion, if I should trust to mere reasoning. I can uprightly say, I never have endeavored by such means to evade a proper consideration of any part of Mr. Williams's reasoning; nor have designedly contrived, in this or any other method, to free myself from the trouble of a just answer to any thing material in his book; and I have been especially careful to speak most particularly to the main parts of his scheme, and such of his reasonings, as I could suppose those of his readers who are on his side, would be most likely to have their chief dependence on and to think most difficult to be answered.*

*With regard to my* method *in this reply, I judged it most convenient to reduce my remarks on Mr. Williams's principles, and the part of his scheme, and kinds of arguing which repeatedly appear in various parts of his book, to their* proper heads. *I thought, this tended to give the reader a clearer and more comprehensive view of the whole controversy, and the nature of the arguments made use of; and that it also would make my work the shorter. For otherwise, I must have had the same things, or things of the same nature, to have observed often, as I found them repeated in different parts of his book, and the same remarks to make over and over again. And that the reader may not be without any advantages which he might have had in the other method, of keeping, in my reply, to the order in which things lie in the book replied to, following my author from one page and paragraph to another I have therefore subjoined a* table, *by which the reader may readily turn to what is said on each particular, that is wont to be brought into this debate, on one side or the other.*

*With regard to my* citations *from Mr. Williams's book, I have never designedly altered his words: And where I have for brevity's sake referred to any sentiment of his, without citing the words at large, I have used care not to change or heighten the sense, or in any respect to vary from the just import of what he delivers. And that the reader may himself more easily and readily judge of the fairness of my citations and references I*

*have mentioned the* page, *and the* part *of the page, where the thing referred to is to be found: Supposing each page to be divided into five equal parts, I have noted the several parts of the page by the letters* a. b. c. d. e. *So that when I have referred to the top of the page, or the first fifth part of it, I have mentioned the number of the page, and added the letter* a, *to the number: And if the* middle, *or third fifth part, then I have added the letter* c. *And so of the rest, as the reader will see. I have ever done thus, unless the thing referred to is to be found through the whole or great part of the page. I have also done the same very often, where I have occasion to cite other authors. Only when I have* before *quoted the same thing I am not always so exact and particular in noting the place again, in my* second *quotation or reference.**

* It was not thought necessary to insert these references, nor the table mentioned above in this work, as it is probable few readers will possess Mr. Williams's Book, or wish to attend so closely to the controversy.

# MISREPRESENTATIONS CORRECTED,

AND

# TRUTH VINDICATED

## PART I.

*Observing the general* Misrepresentations *Mr.* WILLIAMS *makes concerning the* Book *he writes against.*

### SECTION I.

*Concerning the* DESIGN *of my writing and publishing my Book, and the* QUESTION *debated in it.*

MR. WILLIAMS asserts it to be my professed and declared *design*, in writing the book, which he has undertaken an answer to, to oppose Mr. STODDARD. He has taken a great liberty in this matter. He charges me with a declared design of writing in opposition to Mr. Stoddard, no less than nine or ten times in his book. And he does not content himself with saying, there are passages in my preface, or elsewhere, whence this may be *inferred*; but he says expressly, that *I profess to be disputing* against Mr. Stoddard's *doctrine* p. 14. That I *tell my readers, I am disputing against* Mr. Stoddard's *question.* p. 37. That I *tell them so in my preface*, p. 107. That I *often declare that I am opposing* Mr. Stoddard's *opinion*, p. 132. And on this foundation he charges me with "blot-

ting a great deal of paper, disserving the cause of truth by changing the question, and putting it in such terms as Mr. Stoddard expressly disclaims, and then confuting it as Mr. Stoddard's principle; unfair treatment of Mr. Stoddard." p. 2. "Surprisingly going off from Mr. Stoddard's argument to cast an odium upon it, treating Mr. Stoddard and his doctrine in such a manner as to reproach him and his principles, tending to render them odious to the unthinkingmultitude, and telling a manifest untruth." p. 14. &c. 15. Whereas, I never once signified it to be the thing I aimed at, to oppose Mr. Stoddard, or appear as *his* antagonist. But the very reverse was true; and meddling with him, or what he had said, I studied to avoid, as much as the circumstances of the debate with my people would allow, who had been taught by him, and who so greatly and continually alleged against me the things which he had said. Nor is there any appearance in those passages Mr. Williams cites from my preface, as though this was the thing I sought or aimed at. Nay, one of those passages which he produces to prove it, shews the contrary: As it shews, that its being so (as I supposed) that what I wrote was not consistent with, but opposite to what Mr. Stoddard had maintained, was an unsought for and unpleasing circumstance of that publication. My words are, "'Tis far from a pleasing circumstance of this publication, that it is against what my honored grandfather strenuously maintained, both from the pulpit and the press." Certainly my *regretting* and *excusing* such an unavoidable circumstance was a thing exceeding diverse from giving notice to the world, that the thing I aimed at was to set myself up as Mr. Stoddard's antagonist, and to write an answer to, and confute what he had written. It will, at first sight, be manifest to every impartial reader, that the design of my preface was not to state the subject and intention of the book: This is done professedly, and very particularly, afterwards, in the first part of the essay itself. And if I might have common justice, surely I might be allowed to tell my own opinion, and declare my own design without being so confidently and frequently charged with *misrepresenting* my own thoughts and intentions.

The very *nature of the case* is such as must lead every impartial person to a conviction, that the design of my writing must be to defend myself, in that controversy, which I had with my people at Northampton ; as it is notorious and publicly known, that *that controversy* was the occasion of my writing ; and that therefore my business must be to defend that opinion or position of *mine* which I had declared to them, which had been the occasion of the controversy, and so the grand subject of debate between us ; whether this were exactly agreeable to any words that might be found in Mr. Stoddard's writings on the subject, or not. Now this opinion or position was the same with that which I expressed in the first part of my book. In such terms I expressed myself to the committee of the church, when I first made that declaration of my opinion, which was the beginning of the controversy, and when writing in defence of my opinion was first proposed : And this was the point continually talked of in all conversation at Northampton, for more than two years, even until Mr. Williams's book came out. The controversy was, *Whether there was any need of making a credible profession of godliness, in order to persons being admitted to full communion ; Whether they must profess saving faith, or whether a profession of common faith were not sufficient ; whether persons must be esteemed truly godly, and must be taken in under that notion, or whether if they appeared morally sincere, that were not sufficient ?* And when my book came abroad, there was no objection made, that I had not truly expressed the subject of debate, in my stating the question : But the subject of debate afterwards, in parish meetings, church meetings, and in all conversation, was the question laid down in my book. No suggestion among them, that the profession persons made in Mr. Stoddard's way, was taken as a profession of *real* godliness, or gospel holiness ; or that they were taken in *under a notion of their being truly pious persons*, as Mr. Williams would have it : No suggestion, that the dispute was only about the *degree of evidence*. But the dispute was, what was the thing to be made *evident ;* whether *real godliness* or, *moral sincerity ?* It was constantly insisted on, with the greatest vehemence, that

it was not saving religion, which needed to be *professed*, or *pretended to*; but another thing, religion of a lower kind. The public *acts* of the church and parish from time to time, shew, that the point in controversy was, *whether the professors of godliness only, ought to be admitted?* Public votes, of which I made a record, were several times to know the church's mind concerning the admission of *those who are able and willing to make a profession of godliness*; using these terms. And once it was passed, that, *such should not be admitted in the way of publicly making such a profession.* And at another time the vote passed, *that the admission of such persons in such a way* (described in the same words) *should not be referred to the judgment of certain neighboring ministers.* At another time, it was insisted on by the parish, in a parish meeting, that I should put a vote in the church, in these words, *Whether there be not a dispute between Mr. Edwards pastor of the church, and the church, respecting the question he hath argued in his book last published?* And accordingly the vote was put and affirmed, in a church meeting, in the same terms. And this was the question I insisted on in my public lectures at Northampton, appointed for giving the reasons of my opinion. My doctrine was in these words, "It is the mind and will of God, that none should be admitted to full communion *in* the church of Christ, but such as in profession, and *in* the eye of a reasonable judgment, are truly saints, or godly persons." The town was full of objections against those sermons: But none, as ever I heard, objected, that my doctrine was *beside the controversy.* And this was all along the point of difference between me and the neighboring *Ministers.* This was the grand subject of debate with them, at a meeting of ministers, appointed on purpose for conference on the subject. It was wholly concerning the *matter* of profession, or the *thing* to be exhibited and made evident or visible; and not about the *manner* of professing, and the *degree* of evidence. And this was the doctrine directly opposed by Mr. A—y, one of the neighboring ministers, whom my people had got as their champion to defend their cause in the pulpit at Northampton. Thus one of the corollaries he drew from his doctrine

(as it was taken from his mouth in writing) was, that "a man may be a visible saint, and yet there be no sufficient grounds for our charity, that he is regenerate." Quite contrary to what Mr. Williams maintains. Another of his corollaries was in these words, "a minister or church may judge a man a saint, and upon good grounds, and not have grounds to judge him regenerate." He proposed this enquiry, "do not such as join themselves to the church, covenant, not only to be visible saints, but saints in heart?" The answer was in the *negative*; quite contrary to Mr. Williams. Another was, "does not a visible saint imply a visibility of grace, or an appearance of it?" The answer was, "not always." Quite contrary to Mr. Williams. Another was, "Is it not hypocrisy in any man, to make a profession of religion, and join himself to the church, and not have grace?" The answer was in the *negative*; also quite contrary to Mr. Williams. But these sermons of Mr. A—y, were highly approved by the generality of the people of Northampton, as agreeable to their minds.

And the controversy, as I have stated it in my book, was the controversy in which the church and I appeared before the *council*, who determined our separation, when we each of us declared our sentiments before them: The point of difference was entirely the *matter* of profession, and the *thing* to be made *visible*; not the *degree* of evidence or *visibility*. No hint was given as though we both agreed, that true piety or gospel holiness was the thing to be made visible, and that such only should be received as are truly godly persons in the eye of the church's judgment (as Mr. Williams holds) and that we only differed about the proper grounds of such a judgment.

And therefore it is apparent, it was this controversy, and its consequences, that were the ground of my separation from my people; and not any thing like the controversy which Mr. Williams professes to manage in his answer. This controversy, when it came out in Mr. Williams's book, was new in Northampton, and entirely alien from all the dispute which had filled that part of the country, and a great part of Neweng-

land, with noise and uproar, for about two years and an half. The thing which Mr. Williams over and over allows to be true, was the very same, both in effect and in terms, which the people had been most vehemently fighting against, from week to week, and from month to month, during all this time: And therefore the design of my writing led and obliged me to maintain that position or doctrine of mine, which was the occasion of this debate.

And, be it so, that I did suppose this position was contrary to Mr. Stoddard's opinion, and was opposed by him, * and therefore thought fit in my preface to excuse myself to the world for differing from him; did this oblige me, in all that I wrote for the maintaining my position, to keep myself strictly to the words which he had expressed *his question* in, and to regulate and limit myself in every argument I used, and objection I answered, by the terms which he made use of in proposing his opinion and arguments? And if I have not done it, do I therefore deserve to be charged before the world with *changing the question*, with *unfair treatment of Mr. Stoddard, with surprisingly going off from his argument*, with *disserving the cause of truth*, &c.

It would have been no great condescension in Mr. Williams if he had allowed that I knew what the question was, which was disputed between me and my people, as well as he, in a distant part of the country: Yea, if he had acknowledged, that I was as likely as he, to understand Mr. Stoddard's real sentiments and practice; since I was in the ministry two years with him, as copastor of the same church, and was united with him in ecclesiastical administrations, in admitting members, and in examining them as to their qualifications, and have stood for more than twenty three years in a pastoral relation to his church, most intimately acquainted with the nature of its constitution, its sentiments and method of administration, and all its religious concerns, have myself been immediately concerned in the admission of more than three quarters of its present members, and have had the greatest occasion to look

* Whether I was mistaken in this, will appear in the sequel.

into their way of admission, and have been acquainted with every living member that Mr. Stoddard had admitted before my coming; and have been particularly informed, by many of them, of the manner of Mr. Stoddard's conduct in admitting them, their own apprehensions concerning the terms of their admission, and the profession they made in order to it; and also the sentiments of the whole of that large town, who were born and brought up under his ministry, concerning his constant doctrine and practice, relating to the admission of members, from their infancy. Whereas, Mr. Williams from his youth had lived in another part of the country, at seventy miles distance.

## SECTION II.

### *Observing Mr. Williams's Misrepresentations of the* principles *and* tenets, *delivered in the book which he undertakes to answer.*

MR. WILLIAMS does very greatly misrepresent the opinion I am of, and the principles I maintain in my book, in many respects.

I. He says, p. 5. "The whole argument, and indeed the whole controversy turns upon this single point, viz. What is that *evidence*, which by divine appointment the church is to have, of the *saintship* of those who are admitted to the outward privileges of the covenant of grace? Mr. Edwards seems to suppose, this must be the *highest* evidence a man can give of sincerity; and I apprehend it to be the *lowest* evidence the nature of the thing will admit." But this is very strange, since I had particularly declared in my *stating of the question* (p. 5.) that the evidence I insisted on, was *some outward manifestation, that ordinarily rendered the thing probable.* Which

shews that all I insisted on, was only, that the evidence should amount to *probability*. And if the nature of the case will admit of some *lower* kind of evidence than this, or if there be any such thing as a sort of evidence that does not so much as amount to *probability*, then it is possible that I may have some controversy with him and others about the degree of evidence: Otherwise it is hard to conceive, how he should contrive to make out a controversy with me.

But that the reader may better judge, whether Mr. Williams truly represents me as supposing that the evidence which should be insisted on, is *the highest evidence a man can give of sincerity*, I would here insert an extract of a letter which I wrote to the Rev. Peter Clark of Salem Village, a twelvemonth before Mr. Williams's book was published: The original is doubtless in Mr. Clark's hands. In that *letter*, I declared my sentiments in the following words: "It does not belong to the controversy between me and my people, how particular or large the profession should be that is required. I should not choose to be confined to exact limits as to that matter. But rather than contend, I should content myself with a few words, briefly expressing the cardinal virtues, or acts implied in a hearty compliance with the covenant of grace; the profession being made (as should appear by inquiry into the person's doctrinal knowledge) understand*ingly*; if there were an external conversation agreeable thereto. Yea, I should think that such a person, solemnly making such a pofession, had a right to be received as the object of a public charity, however he himself might scruple his own conversion, on account of his not remembering the time, not knowing the method of his conversion, or finding so much remaining sin, &c. And (if his own scruples did not hinder)* I

* I added this, because I supposed that such persons as judge themselves unconverted, if of my principles, respecting qualifications for communion, would scruple coming, and could not come with a good conscience: But if they were of Mr. Stoddard's principle, viz. That unconverted men might lawfully come, neither a man's being of that opinion, nor his judging himself unconverted, would hinder my receiving him who exhibited proper evidence to the church of his being a convert.

should think a minister or church had no right to debar such a professor, though he should say, he did not think himself converted. For I call that a profession of godliness, which is a profession of the great things wherein godliness consists, and not a profession of his own opinion of his good estate."

*Northampton, May* 7, 1750.

In like manner I explained my opinion, very particularly and expressly, before the council that determined my separation from my people, and before the church, in a very public manner in the meetinghouse, many people being present, near a year before Mr. Williams's book was published; and to make it the more sure, that what I maintained might be well observed, I afterwards sent the foregoing extract of my letter to Mr. Clark of Salem village, into the council. And, as I was informed, it was particularly taken notice of in the council, and handed round among them, to be read by them.

The same council, having heard that I had made certain draughts of the covenant, or forms of a public profession of religion, which I stood ready to accept from the candidates for communion, they, for their further information, sent for them. Accordingly I sent them four distinct draughts or forms, which I had drawn up about a twelvemonth before, (near two years before the publishing of Mr. Williams's book) as what I stood ready to accept (any one of them) rather than contend and break with my people. The two shortest of those forms were as follows.

One of them was,

"I hope, I do truly find a heart to give up myself wholly to God, according to the tenor of that covenant of grace which was sealed in my baptism, and to walk in a way of that obedience to all the commandments of God, which the covenant of grace requires, as long as I live.

The other,

"I hope, I truly find in my heart a willingness to comply with all the commandments of God, which require me to give

Now it is in this sense I use the phrase, *positive judgment*, viz. In opposition to a mere *negative charity*; as I very plainly express the matter, and particularly and fully explain myself in *stating the question*. In my *Inquiry*, (p. 5.) I have the following words: "By *Christian judgment* I intend something further than a kind of mere *negative* charity, implying that we forbear to censure and condemn a man, because we do not know but that he may be godly, and therefore forbear to proceed on the foot of such a censure or judgment in our treatment of him; as we would kindly entertain a stranger, not knowing but, in so doing, we entertain an angel, or precious saint of God: But I mean a *positive judgment*, founded on some *positive* appearance or visibility, some outward manifestation that ordinarily renders the thing *probable*. There is a difference between suspending our judgment, or forbearing to condemn, or having some hope that possibly the thing may be so, and so hoping the best, and a *positive* judgment in favor of a person. For a having some hope, only implies, that a man is not in utter despair of a thing; though his prevailing opinion may be otherwise, or he may suspend his opinion."

Here I think, my meaning is very plainly and carefully explained. However, inasmuch as the word *positive* is sometimes used for *peremptory* or *certain*, Mr. Williams catches at the term, and lays fast hold of the advantage he thinks this gives him, and is abundant, all over his book, in representing as though I insisted on a *positive judgment* in this sense. So he applies the word, referring to my use of it, from time to time. Thus, p. 69. "If there be any thing in this argument, I think it must be what I have observed, *viz.* That a Christian must make a *positive judgment* and determination, that another man is a saint, and this judgment must have for its ground something which he supposes is, at least ordinarily, a *certain* evidence of his saintship, and by which gracious sincerity is certainly distinguished from every thing else." And p. 141. "The notion of men's being able and fit to determine *positively* the condition of other men, or the *certainty* of their gracious state, has a direct tendency to de-

ceive the souls of men." And thus Mr. Williams makes mention of a *positive judgment* above forty times in his book, with reference to my use of it, and to my declared opinion of the necessity of it; and every where plainly uses the phrase in that sense, for *absolute* and *peremptory*, in opposition to *doubtfulness*; continually insinuating, that this is what I professedly insist on. Whereas, every *act* of the judgment whatsoever, is a positive judgment in the sense in which I have fully declared I use it, *viz.* in opposition to *negative*; which is no *act*, but a mere withholding of the act of the judgment, or forbearing any actual judgment.* Mr. Williams *himself* does abundantly suppose, that there must be a *positive* judgment in *this* sense: He grants the very thing, though he rejects the term: For he holds, there must be such a "visibility as makes persons to appear to be real saints." p. 5.— He allows, that "the moral image of God or Christ must appear or be supposed to be in them, as the ground and rea-

* Mr. John Glas, in his *Observes upon the original Constitution of the Christian Church*, (p. 55, 56) says as follows. "You seem to have a great prejudice at what you call *positive evidences*, and judging upon them in the admission of church members. And I am at some loss to underſtand what you mean by them, though I have heard the expression frequently, among people of your opinion, used to express some very ill thing. If you mean by *positive evidences*, infallible evidences of a thing that none but God *infallibly knows*, and can assure a man's own conscience of, with respect to a man himself; I think it would be a very great evil for a man to require ſuch evidence to found his judgment of charity, concerning another man's faith and holiness, or concerning his being an object of *brotherly love*. And I think, he is bound by the law of Christ to form his judgment in this matter upon less evidence. But if you mean *positive evidence* in opposition to *negative*, which is no evidence, I must own, I know not how to form a judgment of charity without some *positive* evidence. And is not a *credible profession* something *positive*? Is not a credible profession of the faith, love, and hope that is in Christ, or of Christianity, a *positive evidence* of a man's being an object of *brotherly love*, which evidence ought to be the ground of my *judgment of charity* concerning him, that he is a Christian, a believer in Christ, a brother for whom Christ died? If it be otherwise, and if there be no evidence upon which I can charitably judge, that a man is a brother for whom Christ died, then tell me, how I can evidence my love to Jesus Christ, in the labor of love towards my brother, whom I have seen; and my love to God, in my love to them that are begotten of him."

son of our charity; and that there must be some apprehension, some judgment of mind, of the saintship of persons, for its foundation, p. 68, and 69, and 71....That they "must have such a character appearing in them, p. 55.— That there must be a judgment founded on "moral Evidence of gospel holiness," p. 139.

III. Mr. Williams to make my scheme appear the more ridiculous, does more than once represent it as my opinion, that in order to persons being admitted into the church, there must be a judgment of their being regenerate, founded on such a degree of evidence, as that it shall not be liable to be mistaken more than once in ten times. Thus, p. 63. "Mr. Edwards himself supposes, in his own scheme, when he has made a positive judgment that every one singly whom he admits into the church is regenerate; yet, when taken collectively, it is probable *one in ten* will be an hypocrite?" So, p. 71. "If any thing be intended to the purpose for which this argument is brought, I conceive it must mean, that there must be such a *positive judgment* of the real holiness of persons, as is *not mistaken more than once in ten* times." Now I desire the reader to observe what is the whole ground, on which he makes such a representation. In explaining my opinion, in the beginning of my inquiry (p. 6) I desired it might be observed, that I did not suppose we ought to expect any such degree of *certainty* of the godliness of those who are admitted into the church, as that when the whole number admitted are taken collectively, or considered in the gross, we should have any reason to suppose every one to be truly godly; though we might have charity for each one that was admitted, taken *singly*, and by himself. And to shew, that such a thing was possible, I endeavored to illustrate it by a comparison, or supposed case of probability *of ten to one* in the example of certain stones, with such probable marks of a *diamond*, as by experience had been found not to fail more than *once in ten times*. In which case, if a particular stone were found with those marks, there would be a probability of *ten to one*, with respect to that stone, singly taken, that it was genuine: But if ten such were taken together, there would

not be the same probability that every one of them was so; but in this case, it is as likely as not, that some one in the ten is spurious. Now it is so apparent, that this particular degree of probability of *ten to one* is mentioned only as a *supposed case*, for illustration, and because, in a particular example, some number or other must be mentioned, that it would have been an affront to the sense of my readers to have added any caution, that he should not understand me otherwise. However, Mr. Williams has laid hold on this, as a good handle by which he might exhibit my scheme to the world in a ridiculous light; as though I had declared it my real opinion, that there must be the probability, of just *ten to one*, of true godliness, in order to persons' admission into the church. He might with as much appearance of sense and justice, have asserted concerning all the supposed cases in books of arithmetic, that the authors intend these cases should be understood as real *facts*, and that they have written their books, with all the sums and numbers in them, as books of *history*; and if any cases mentioned there only as examples of the several rules, are unlikely to be true accounts of fact, therefore have charged the authors with writing a *false* and *absurd* history.

IV. Another thing, yet further from what is honorable in Mr. Williams is this; that whereas I said as above, that there ought to be a prevailing opinion concerning *those that* are admitted, *taken singly, or by themselves*, that they are truly godly or gracious, though when we look on the whole number in the gross, we are far from determining that every one is a true saint, and that not one of the judgments we have passed, has been mistaken; Mr. Williams, because I used the phrase *singly taken*, has laid hold on the expression and from thence has taken occasion to insinuate to his readers, as if my scheme were so very extravagant, that according to this, when a great multitude are admitted, their admitters must be confident of EVERY ONE's being *regenerated*. Hence he observes, (p. 98.) "There is no appearance, that John made a positive judgment that *every one* of these people were regenerated." Plainly using the expression as a very strong one; leading the reader to suppose, I insist the evidence shall be so clear, that when

such a vast multitude as John baptized are viewed, the admitter should be peremptory in it, that his judgment has not failed so much as in a *single* instance; the very *reverse* of what I had expressed. In like manner, Mr. Williams treats the matter from time to time. As in p. 55. "The thing to be proved from hence is, that the apostles and primitive Christians, not only thought that these persons were Christians, by reason of their external calling, and professed compliance with the call; but had formed a positive judgment concerning EVERY ONE OF THEM SINGLY, that they were real saints." Here the expression is plainly used as a very strong one; as implying much more than esteeming so great a multitude, when taken in the gross to be generally true saints, and with a manifest design to carry the same idea in the mind of the reader as was before mentioned. See another like instance p. 62.

V. However, my opinion is not represented bad enough yet; but to make it appear still worse, Mr. Williams is bold to strain his representation of it to that height, as to suggest that what I insist on, is a *certainty* of others' regeneration: Though this be so diverse from what I had largely explained in stating the question, and plainly expressed in other parts of my book, * and also inconsistent with his own representations in other places. For if what I insist on be a probability that *may fail once in ten times*, as he says it is p. 63, then it is not a *certainty* that I insist on; as he suggests, p. 141. Speaking of the evil consequences of my opinion, he says, "the notion of men's being able and fit to determine positively the condition of other men, or the certainty of their gracious estate, has a direct tendency to deceive the souls of men." So again in p. 69. And he suggests, that I require more than *moral evidence*, in p. 6, and p. 139.

* In stating the question, p. 5, I explained the requisite visibility, to be *some outward manifestation, that ordinarily renders the thing probable.* To the like purpose, is what I say in p. 11, and p. 12. And in p. 106, I say expressly. "Not a *certainty*, but a profession and visibility of these things, must be the rule of the church's proceeding."

VI. Mr. Williams represents me as insisting on some way of judging the state of such as are admitted to communion, *by their inward and spiritual experiences*, diverse from judging *by their profession and behavior*. So p. 7. "If their outward profession and behavior be the ground of this judgment, then it is not the inward experience of the heart." p. 55. "Which judgment must be founded on something beyond and beside their external calling, and *visible profession* to comply with it, and to be separated for God: And therefore this judgment must be founded, either upon revelation, or a personal acquaintance with *their experiences*," &c. In like manner he is abundant, from one end of his book to the other, in representing as though I insitsted on judging of Men by *their inward and spiritual experiences*, in some peculiar manner. Which is something surprizing, since there is not so much as a word said about *relating, or giving an account of experiences*, or what is commonly so called, as a term of communion. Mr. Williams (p. 6) pretends to quote two passages of mine, as an evidence, that this is what I insist on. One is from the 5th page of my book. It is true I there say thus, "It is a visibility to the eye of the public charity, and not a private judgment, that gives a person a right to be received as a visible saint by the public." And I there say, "a public and serious *profession* of the great and main things wherein the essence of true religion or godliness consists, together with an honest character, an agreeable conversation, and good understanding of the doctrines of Christianity, and particularly those doctrines that teach the grand condition of salvation, and the nature of true saving religion; this justly recommends persons to the good opinion of the public; whatever suspicions and fears any particular person, either the minister, or some other, may entertain, from what he in particular has observed; perhaps the manner of his expressing himself in giving an account of his experiences, or an obscurity in the order and method of his experiences, &c." But the words do not imply, it may be demanded of the candidate, that he should give an account of his experiences to the minister or any body else, as the term

of his admission into the church; nor had I respect to any such thing: But I knew it was the manner in many places for those who hoped they were godly persons, to converse with their neighbors, and especially with their minister, about their experiences; whether it was required of them in order to their coming into the church, or no; and particularly, I was sensible, that this was the manner at Northampton, for whose sake especially I wrote; and I supposed it the way of many ministers, and people, to judge of others' state, openly and publicly, by the order and method of their experiences, or the manner of their relating them. But this I condemn in the very passage that Mr. Williams quotes; and very much condemn, in other writings of mine which have been published; and have ever loudly condemned, and borne my testimony against.

There is one passage more, which Mr. Williams adds to the preceding, and fathers on me, to prove that I require *an account of experiences* in order to admission; pretending to rehearse my words, with marks of quotation, saying as follows, p. 6, and as he further explains himself elsewhere; "the proper visibility which the public is to have of a man's being a saint, must be on some account of his experience of those doctrines which teach the nature of true saving religion." I have made long and diligent search for such a passage in my writings, but cannot find it. Mr. Williams says "I thus explain myself elsewhere:" But I wish he had mentioned in what place.

If there be such a sentence in some of my writings (as I suppose there is not) it will serve little to Mr. Williams's purpose. If we take the word experience according to the common acceptation of it in the English language, viz. a person's perceiving or knowing any thing by trial or experiment, or by immediate sensation or consciousness within himself: In this sense, I own, it may from what I say in my book be inferred, that a man's profession of his experience should be required as a term of communion: And so it may be as justly and as plainly inferred, that Mr. Williams himself insists on a profession of experience as a term of communion;

experience of *a deep conviction of a man's undone state without Christ*; experience of a *persuasion of his judgment and conscience, that there is no other way of salvation*; experience of *unfeigned desires to be brought to the terms of the covenant*: For such things as these, he says, must be professed: So p. 75, and in innumerable other places. There is no such thing possible as a man's professing any thing within himself or belonging to his own mind, either good or bad, either common or saving, unless it be something that he *finds*, or (which is the same thing) *experiences*, within himself.

I know the word *experience* is used by many in a sort of peculiar sense, for the particular order and method of what passes within the mind and heart in conversion. And in this sense, Mr. Williams knows I disclaim the notion of making *experiences* a term of communion. I say he knows it because (in p. 6) he quotes and rehearses the very words wherein I do expressly disclaim it. And I am very large and particular in testifying against it in my book on *Religious Affections*: A book I have good reason to think Mr. Williams has seen and read, having been thus informed by a man of his own principles, that had it from his mouth. There, in p. 300 and 301, I say as follows: "In order to persons' making a proper profession of Christianity, such as the scripture directs to, and such as the followers of Christ should require in order to the acceptance of the professors with full charity, as of their society, it is not necessary they should give an account of the particular *steps* and *method*, by which the holy Spirit, sensibly to them, wrought, and brought about those great essential things of Christianity in their hearts. There is no footstep in the scripture of any such way of the apostles, or primitive ministers and Christians requiring any such relation in order to their receiving and treating others as their Christian brethren, to all intents and purposes; or of their first examining them concerning the particular method and order of their *experiences*. They required of them a profession of the things wrought; but no account of the manner of working was required of them. Nor is there the least shadow in the scripture of any such custom in the church of God, from Adam to the

death of the Apostle John." To the same purpose again I express myself in p. 302, and in the preface to the book that Mr. Williams writes against, I make particular mention of this book *on Religious Affections*, wherein these things are said; and there declare expressly, that when I wrote that book, I was of the same mind concerning the qualifications of communicants that I am of now. But,

VII. To make my scheme still more obnoxious and odious, Mr. Williams once and again insinuates, that I insist on an account of such inward FEELINGS, as are by men supposed to be the certain discriminating marks of grace (so p. 7, and 141) though I never once used the phrase any where in my book. I said not a word, about *inward feelings*, from one end of it to the other: Nor is any *inward feeling* at all more implied in my scheme, than in his. But however, Mr. Williams knew that these phrases, *experiences* and *inward feelings*, were become odious of late to a great part of the country; and especially the latter of them, since Mr. Whitefield used it so much: And he well knew, that to tack these phrases to my scheme, and to suggest to his readers that these were the things I professed to insist on, would tend to render me and my scheme contemptible. If he says, though I use not that phrase, yet the things I insist on, are such as are *inwardly felt*; such as saving repentance, faith, &c. I answer, these things are no more *inward feelings*, than the things he himself insists on; such as a *deep conviction* of a man's undone state, *unfeigned fervent desires* after Christ, a *fixed resolution* for Christ, *engagedness* for heaven, &c.

VIII. Mr. Williams abundantly, in almost all parts of his book, represents my principles to be such as suppose *men* to be the SEARCHERS *of others hearts*. For which I have given no other ground, than only supposing that some such qualifications are necessary in order to communion, which have their seat in the *heart*, and so not to be intuitively seen by others; and that such qualifications must by profession and practice, be made so visible or credible to others, that others may rationally judge they are there. And Mr. Williams supposes the same thing as much as I. In p. 111, he expressly speaks

of the qualifications necessary to communion, as being *in the heart*, and not possible to be known any other way than by their being seen there: And also often allows, that these qualifications must be exhibited, and made *visible*, by a credible profession, and answerable practice: Yea, he goes further, he even supposes that those who admit them to sacraments, ought to be *satisfied* by their profession, that they *really have these qualifications*. Thus he says, p. 54. "The baptizer *ought to be satisfied* by a person's profession, that he really believes the gospel, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour.

IX. Mr. Williams is not contented with all these representations of my scheme, but will have it appear more absurd and monstrous still; and therefore represents me as maintaining, that it is not the *visible profession of experiences*, that I suppose the ground of the church's judgment; but these *experiences and inward feelings themselves*, by having *the heart turned inside out*, and viewing them immediately *in the heart itself*, and *judging upon the next and immediate actings of the heart*. Here, I only desire the reader to read down Mr. Williams's 7th page, and make his own reflections.

X. Whereas, in p. 16, of my book, I observed it to be the opinion of some, that, "Although the members of the visible church are saints in profession and visibility, and *in the* acceptance of others, yet this is not with reference to saving holiness, but to quite another sort of saintship, viz. *moral sincerity*; and that this is the *real saintship*, *discipleship*, and *godliness*, that is professed and visible in them." &c. Mr. Williams, p. 4, 5, says, "He does not remember that he ever heard of this, or that any body thought of it, before he saw it in my book; and represents it as a poor man of straw, of my own framing: And he insists upon it, that it is allowed on all hands, that the visibility must be with *reference to saving holiness*.

I will not say, that Mr. Williams knew it to be a false representation which he here makes: But this I will say, that he ought to have been better informed, before he had thus publicly ridiculed this as a fiction of mine; especially consider-

ing the opportunities and advantages he has had to know otherwise: This being the notion that had been (as was before observed) so loudly and publicly insisted on, for more than two years, by the people of Northampton, and by the neighboring ministers, and those of them that were Mr. Williams's near relatives; as he has had abundant opportunities to be fully informed, having withal had great inducements to inquire. Besides, that this has been the universal opinion of all that part of the country (who thought themselves Mr. Stoddard's followers) for more than twenty years, is a fact as notorious, as that the people there generally believe Mr. Stoddard's doctrine of the necessity of a work of conversion, in order to get to heaven. And this is the opinion professedly maintained in a pamphlet published in Boston, (Anno 1741) intitled, *A right to the Lord's supper considered:* A piece which has long been well known among Mr. Williams's nearest relatives, and in good repute with them; as I have had occasion to observe. This pamphlet insists expressly and abundantly, that *moral sincerity* is the REAL *discipleship* and *holiness*, with respect to which visible Christians are called *disciciples* and *saints*, in scripture. Particularly see pages 9, 10, 13, and 14. And which is more strange yet, Mr. Blake, the great author Mr. Williams makes so much use of, and in a book which I know he has long been the possessor of, speaks much of a profession of religion that has respect only to a *dogmatical, historical faith*, a *common faith*, a *faith true indeed* (as he says) *in its kind, but short of that which is justifying and saving*, and a *profession which goes no further*, as that which entitles to sealing ordinances. Thus he does expressly. See Blake on the covenant, p. 241, 244, 245. The same author again and again distinguishes between *justifying faith* and *faith of profession;* as in p. 284, 285, 286. And which is more than all this, Mr. Williams (as will appear in the sequel) abundantly contends for the same thing himself, though against himself, and although he charges me in p. 35, with a great misrepresentation, in supposing that according to the scheme of my opposers, the profession required in those that are admitted, does not imply a pretence to *any thing more than moral sincerity and common grace.*

# PART II.

## *An Examination of Mr.* Williams's SCHEME, *in the various Parts of it.*

### SECTION I.

### *Mr.* Williams's *Concessions.*

MR. WILLIAMS allows, that, in order to a man's coming to sacraments, "he ought solemnly to profess and declare, that he is really and heartily convinced of the divine truth of the gospel, p. 30, 36, 32, 84. That he does sincerely, and with all his heart believe the gospel,* p. 49, And that they which admit him, ought to be satisfied he really believes the gospel, that Jesus is the son of God, the Saviour p. 54, that he should profess and declare he believes in Christ, and that the gospel is indeed the revelation of God." p. 5, he allows, that "none ought to be admitted, but such as openly profess and declare an hearty consent to the covenant of grace, and compliance with the call of the gospel, and submission to the proposals of it, and satisfaction with that device for our salvation that is revealed in the gospel, and with the offer which God makes of himself to be our God in Christ Je-

* When I first proposed to a certain candidate for communion at Northampton, the publicly making this profession, viz. *That he believed the truth of the gospel with all his heart*, many of the people cried out, that I insisted on what no saint on earth could profess, and that this amounted to a profession of absolute perfection. Hence many reports spread about the country, that I insisted on perfection as a term of communion.

ans,* and that they fall in with the terms of salvation proposed in the gospel, and renounce all other ways." p. 5, 8, 9, 11, 18, 55, 32, He plainly supposes it "not to be lawful for them that are lukewarm in religion, or those that serve two masters, to come to sacraments." p. 32, 35, 36, "He supposes, that there must be "a real determination of a man's judgment and affection for the word of God. p. 53, That there ought to be a profession of subjection to Christ with all the heart, p. 10, and of a devotedness to the service of God, p. 49, and a professed giving up themselves to Christ, to be taught, ruled, and led by him in the Gospel way to salvation; p. 31, 32. And that communicants ought to "declare, that they do, with all their hearts, cast themselves upon the mercy of God, to help them to keep covenant." P. 125, That "they ought to profess a proper respect to Christ in their hearts, as well as a true notion of Him in their heads." P. 31. That they must make a profession that "imports a pretence of real friendship to Christ, and love to God above the world." P. 36. That "none ought to be admitted but visible saints, and that this visibility must be such as to a judgment of rational charity makes them appear as real saints, wise virgins, and endowed with gospel holiness." P. 5, 41, 42, 139, 14. That "there should be a charitable presumption, that the Spirit of God has taken hold of them, and turned their hearts to God." P. 52. That "they should be such persons as are in the eye of a Christian judgment truly gracious persons, supposed and believed in charity to be those to whom God has given saving repentance, and an heart purifying faith." P. 65, and 47, "Such as have the moral image of Christ appearing in them, or supposed to be in them, and are to be loved on that account." P. 68, "He allows, that there ought to be some apprehension, some judgment of the mind, that they are Christians and Saints, and have the moral image of God in

* Mr. Williams cites Mr. Guthrie (preface p. 4) as on his side, when he speaks of such a profession, as that which is to be made.

them."* P. 68, 69, and 71, He allows, that "they must be taken into the church under a notion of their being godly, and with respect to such a character appearing on them: And very often insists, that "they themselves must make such a pretence." P. 55, † 132, 136, 143, So he allows, that they

* By this it appears, when Mr. W. speaks of the Church's *rational judgment that persons have real holiness*, and the like, he does not mean merely a treating them as such, in public administrations, and external conduct: For here he speaks not of the external conduct, but of *the apprehension of the understanding, and judgment of the mind*; and this as the foundation of the affection of the heart.

† Mr. Williams's words (P. 55) are pretty remarkable: "The reader (says he) will judge, whether the manner of Mr. Edwards's treating the question, and representing the opinion of Mr. Stoddard and others, in the words I have quoted above, be not *unaccountable*; though this is neither the first nor the last time of his treating the matter in such a manner: As if Mr. Stoddard and his adherents supposed persons were to be admitted without any notion of their being godly, or any respect to such a character, appearing on them; and that they themselves are without such a pretence." Whereas, Mr. Stoddard expressly maintains, that men may be *duly qualified* and *fit matter* for church membership, without saving grace. (Appeal, p. 15, 16.) And that they *may* and *ought to come, though they know themselves to be in a natural condition.* (Doct. of Instituted Churches, P. 21, See also his Sermon on the subject, p. 13.) And according to Mr. Stoddard, communicants are not so much as *supposed* godly persons. This (Appeal. p 43) he says expressly, That, *by the institution, communicants at the Lord's Supper are not supposed to be real saints.* And also asserts, (Appeal, p. 76) That we are not obliged to *believe* visible saints to be real saints. And it seems by what he says in his Appeal, (p. 17) The church may admit persons to communion, when at the same time *they are aware that they are hypocrites.* For there, in answer to Dr. Mather, who had cited certain texts to prove, that when hypocrites do come into the church, they come in *unawares*; he says, *But neither of the places he cites proves that* all *hypocrites come in unawares.* And in the next page he says, *The discovery of men's hypocrisy is not the reason of their being cast out.* Still evidently on the same foundation, that some known hypocrites are *fit* to be admitted; for he says, (p. 15) *Such as, being admitted, may not be cast out, are fit to be admitted.* And these things are agreeable to what I know Mr. Stoddard's church and congregation have universally supposed to be his constant doctrine and practice among them. Thus it was, without one dissenting voice among them, during the twentyfour years that I lived with them. And now the reader is desired to judge, as Mr. W. would have him, whether my representing it to be the opinion of Mr. S. and his adherents, that persons might *be admitted into the*

must not only be endowed with Christian piety in appearance; but that they must be so in profession. P. 3, 41, 44, "That they make a shew of being wise virgins by the nature and purport of their profession." P. 42, And he insists with great strenuousness, over and over, upon its being their scheme, "that they ought to make a profession of real saintship." P. 132, Yea, he holds, that there must be not only some visibility and profession of real piety, but *moral evidence of it*, p. 139. He often uses notes of distinction, distinguishing between *moral sincerity*, and *real piety*; and insists much upon it as belonging to their scheme; that there must be a visibility of the latter, as thus distinguished from the former. So, he rejects with great contempt any suggestion of its being the scheme of my opposers, that *moral sincerity* is that saintship, which is to be professed and made visible; and in distinction from this, he asserts, that it is *real holiness*, p. 4, and 5. And again p. 35, he uses a note of distinction, and insists that the opposers of my opinion hold, that communicants "must make a profession of something MORE than common grace and moral sincerity." And again p. 139, he uses notes of distinction or discrimination, and says, that "they must exhibit a credible profession of gospel holiness, and NOT MERELY of moral sincerity; and says, it is NOT the visibility of moral sincerity, BUT the moral evidence of gospel sincerity, which God's word makes the rule of judging." And as he holds, that communicants must profess gospel holiness, so he seems to suppose that these professors must judge this of themselves; several things he says, seem plainly to imply it. This appears evidently implied in that interrogation put by Mr. Williams p. 35, "Mr. Stoddard rightly supposes all visible saints who are not truly pious, to be hypocrites; and the scripture supposes and calls them so too: But will it

*church without any notion of their being godly, or any respect to such a character appearing on them*, be unaccountable. By these things it is evident, Mr. Stoddard's scheme was far from being what Mr. Williams represents it to be, and pretends to maintain as his. And if the question he had to controvert with me, were Mr. Stoddard's question, as he asserts, yet he greatly mistakes *the true state of the question*, though that be given as the title of his book.

therefore follow, that all hypocrites know they are so ?" And he in effect asserts, " that men should look at such a qualification, as sanctifying grace, in themselves, and inquire whether they have it, or no, in order to determine whether they should present themselves to gospel ordinances :" For he greatly finds fault with me for suggesting, as if those of a different opinion from me supposed, that persons have no manner of need to look at any such qualification in themselves, or at all inquire, whether they have it, in order to present themselves to sacraments. He refers to that passage in my book p. 55. " I cannot conceive what should move Philip to utter those words, or what he should aim at in them, if he at the same time supposed that the Eunuch had no manner of need to look at any such qualification in himself, or at all to inquire whether he had such a faith, or no, in order to determine whether he MIGHT present himself as the subject of baptism." It is plain the qualification I have respect to, is *grace*, or *saving faith*. And so Mr. Williams himself understands me ; as appears by his reflections, p. 49. Where, after quoting this passage, he consigns me over to another judgment, for suggesting that my opposers hold what I had there expressed, and for " representing the matter, as if they looked on it as no matter whether a person coming to gospel ordinances had any GRACE or no, and that he had no manner of need to inquire any thing about his sincerity."*

* Now let all who have been acquainted with the controversy between me and my people at Northampton, consider these things, which Mr. Williams earnestly insists do belong to his scheme; and judge whether they be agreeable to the scheme which my opposers there have so vehemently and long contended for ; yea, whether they are not very opposite to it ; or whether in these things Mr. Williams has not intirely yielded up, yea, vehemently asserted the chief things concerning which they contested with me; and so, whether he has at all helped their cause by writing his book, or rather, on the contrary, has fought against them.

## SECTION II.

### *Some of the plain* consequences *of the foregoing concessions of Mr. Williams.*

1. IF it be as Mr. Williams says, that "The church ought to admit none to their holy communion, in special ordinances, but visible saints, and that this visibility must be such as to a judgment of rational charity, makes them appear as real saints, and those that are admitted must be such as profess real saintship, gospel holiness, in distinction from moral sincerity;" then the whole of my first argument, from the nature of a *visibility* and *profession* of Christianity, is allowed by him, in both *premises* and *consequence*. And indeed Mr. Williams does this not only consequentially, but he is express in it. In p. 4, taking notice of this argument, he says, "The sense and force of it wholly lies in this compass; A *visible saint* is one that to the view, appearance and judgment, of the church, is a *real saint;* and since none but *visible saints* are to be admitted by the church, therefore none are to be admitted but such as *appear* to the view and judgment of the church to be real saints." But these things, which Mr. Williams himself allows as the sum of the argument, both premises and consequence, are expressly allowed by him in what there follows.

2. If there must be a visibility and profession of real piety in distinction from moral sincerity, so that it can be truly said, as Mr. Williams says with discretive terms, and notes of *discrimination*, that "NOT MERELY the one must be professed, BUT the other; and that MORE than moral sincerity must be professed," &c. Then it follows (or rather it is the same thing) that men must profess religion with some *discrimination* or marks of difference in their words, distinguishing what is professed from moral sincerity; contrary to what Mr. Williams strenuously and frequently asserts. (P. 6, 9, and many other places) For if the profession is made in words

that signify no *difference*, then nothing *different* is signified or professed by those words; and so nothing MORE; contrary also to what Mr. Williams also asserts.

3. If it be as Mr. Williams says, that "The scripture has determined none ought to be admitted but such as make an open profession and declaration of an hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, such as covenant with God with their whole hearts, and profess gospel holiness;" Then the whole of my second argument, concerning *explicit covenanting with God*, is expressly allowed, in both *premises* and *consequence*; though Mr. Williams seems at the same time with so much labor and earnestness, to militate against it. For the *premises* are, that *all ought openly and explicitly to own God's covenant, or consent to the terms of it*: This is the same thing that he asserts as above. And the *consequence*, or *thing* which I inferred from it, was, that all that are admitted ought to make a profession of real Godliness: And this also he expressly and often allows.

4. Since it is supposed, that in order to admission, men *ought to profess real friendship to Christ, and love to him above the world, and to profess a proper respect to Christ in their hearts, as well as a true notion of him in their heads*; and that *they ought to profess gospel holiness, and not merely moral sincerity*: Therefore the whole of what belongs to my *third* argument, is allowed, both *premises* and *consequence*. The *premises* were, that the *nature of things affords as much reason for professing a proper respect to Christ in the heart, as a true notion of him in the head*: This he allows. What I endeavor to infer from hence, was, that *therefore men ought to profess true piety, and not moral sincerity only*: And this is also allowed by him.

5. It appears that the whole of my fourth argument, both *premises* and *consequence*, is allowed. The *premises* were, that *the scripture reckons all visible saints who are not truly pious, to be hypocrites*: This Mr. Williams expressly allows, p. 25. The *consequence* I inferred, was, that visible saints are such as make a profession of true godliness, and not moral sincerity only: This also is very fully allowed by him, p. 139.

6. Since it is supposed, that when Christ's rules are attended, they that come to sacraments, *do not know themselves to be hypocrites, but must look at such a qualification in themselves, as grace, and make such a pretence and profess gospel holiness;* Therefore all is in effect allowed, that I endeavored from the latter part of the 7th chapter of Matthew, which was to shew that professing Christians in general, all those that said *Lord, Lord*, both those that built on the *sand*, and those that built on a *rock*, were such as imagined themselves to have a saving interest in Christ, and *pretended* to be his real disciples, and made such a profession. The same was what I endeavored to shew from the parable of the ten Virgins. And therefore all that I argued from thence is in like manner allowed.

7. Hence in vain is all the opposition Mr. Williams makes to what I allege from the Acts of the Apostles, from chap. ii. from the story of the *Eunuch*, and other parts of that book, concerning the manner and circumstances of the admission of members into the primitive Christian church, and the profession they made; seeing he grants the main point I endeavored to prove by it, viz. That they *did make*, and all adult persons that are admitted into the church, *must make* a profession of *something* MORE *than moral sincerity, even gospel holiness.*

8. Hence, in vain is all he says in opposition to my eighth argument, taken from the manner of the apostles treating and addressing the primitive churches in their epistles; since he does either expressly or virtually grant each of those three things, which he himself reckons up as the sum of what I intend under that argument, viz. (1.) "That the apostles speak to the churches, and of them, as supposing and judging them to be gracious persons. (2.) That the members of these churches had such an opinion of themselves. (3.) That they had this judgment one of another." Mr. Williams allows all these. He abundantly allows and asserts, that the members of churches are such as are supposed and judged, and rationally judged, to be gracious persons, by those that admit them; that they are taken in under that notion, and *from respect to such a character appearing on them;* and that they are *rationally judged to be so* by their fellow Christians;

and that they must *look at such a character in themselves*, and must make such a *pretence*.

9. Since Mr. Williams abundantly allows that visible Christians, must "Be believed in charity to be truly pious; and that they are such as have the moral image of Christ appearing in them, and supposed to be in them, and that they are to be loved on that account:" Therefore very impertinent and inconsistent is the opposition he makes to my ninth argument, from the nature of that *brotherly love* required towards all visible Christians; which was to shew, that visible Christians by the rule of Christ were to be *apprehended* to be true Christians.

10. In like manner, vain and to no purpose is the opposition he makes to my tenth argument, from the Nature of *sacramental actions*, supposed in their intent and *signification* to be a solemn profession of those things wherein real piety consists, viz. a cordial acceptance of Christ and his benefits; from thence arguing, that a profession of these things is necessary; and so inferring that those who perform these actions, should suppose themselves truly to accept of Christ: Since both these things are in effect granted, that communicants must judge that they have sanctifying grace, and also that they must profess gospel holiness, a compliance with the call of the gospel, and falling in with the terms of *salvation* proposed, &c.

11. In vain also is the opposition he makes to my eleventh argument, from 1 Cor. xi. 28. "Let a man examine himself; and so let him eat." Inferring from thence, that a man ought to inquire concerning such a qualification in himself, as grace, in order to know whether he may come to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Since Mr. Williams himself plainly supposes this very thing, "That men ought to look at such a qualification in themselves, as grace, and to inquire whether they have it, in order to determine whether they may present themselves to Christian sacraments."

12. If it be true, according to Mr. Williams's representation of his own scheme, "That persons may not be admitted to sacraments, but under a notion of their being truly god-

ly, and with respect to such a character appearing on them ; And that persons themselves had need to look at such a qualification in themselves, and inquire whether they have it, in order to determine whether they may come to sacraments ;" it must be because if they find they have it *not*, they *may not* come, or (which is the same thing) *it is not lawful* for them to come. For it would be ridiculous to say that others must look at such a qualification in them, and must not admit them but from respect to such a character on them ; and that they themselves also must look at such a qualification in themselves, and inquire whether they have it in order to determine whether they MAY come : When yet they *may* come whether they have it or no, and have as much of a lawful right without it, as with it. So that Mr. Williams has in effect determined against himself the grand point, which he himself insists on, as the point in dispute, according to the *true state of* the question. And therefore,

13. It follows from the foregoing concessions, that Mr. Williams is inconsistent with himself in all his arguments, that men may come to sacraments without such a qualification or character as that of true piety, " Because God has given no certain rule by which sacraments may be restrained to such ;* *or* Because that otherwise none might come but those that know they have such a character ;† *or* because the contrary doctrine tends to bring saints into great perplexities in their attendance on sacraments ;‡ *or from* the lawfulness of unregenerate men's attending other duties."‖ If there be any force in this arguing from other duties to an attendance on sacraments, then the argument will infer, that men must not be admitted to other duties, *but under the notion of their being truly godly, and from respect to such a character appearing on them, &c.*—as Mr. Williams insists with regard to Christian sacraments. And so if these things which Mr. Williams concedes and asserts, are true, in vain is all arguing from " the like tendency in sacraments to convert men,

* See Mr. Williams's book p. 106. † Ibid. p. 108. ‡ p. 120. ‖ p. 123.

, no pretence to any proper discern-
her distinction pleaded, than what is
:arity. And when, according to Mr.
, churches are obliged to make a dis-
judgment they pass, and to admit none
be true saints; so that those who are
eir judgment, only are to be admitted,
in the eye of their judgment, are to be

y Mr. Williams of the visible church's
*ist*, and men's being admitted into it as
rs, some of them in order to attain
3) is nothing to the purpose, if it be as
and asserts, that in order to be admitted
must be supposed in a reasonable judg-
ainment already, and make a pretence to
ssion of it, and must give moral evi-
it, and must be admitted into the school
than that of their being already possess-

Williams expressly says, "That persons
without a credible profession, visibility
not only of moral sincerity, but true ho-
all is wholly insignificant and vain, that
he children of Israel were visible saints
of such holiness, by reason of the idola-
wickedness of vast multitudes of them
d's people: And so likewise, all that is
members of the primitive Church had
saintship than they, *because they are*
*ve*: And also all that Mr. Williams
any of the members of the primitive
y wicked as they.

Mr. Williams the terms of admis-
nces, were "the same as to Christian
ssion and the same visibility of saint-
r;" as he strenuously asserts, p. 57,
llow from his foregoing concessions

as in other duties :"§ And in vain is it to argue the lawfulness of men's coming without this character, " from their obligation to perform external covenant duties,¶ and to carry themselves like saints :"** And in vain is all arguing from pretended bad consequences of the contrary doctrine.††

14. The opposition Mr. Williams makes to my argument from Isa. lvi. especially those words v. 5, 6. " The sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to love the Lord and be his servants....will I bring into my holy mountain"....To prove that none have a right in the sight of God to the privileges of the Christian church, but those that love God, and are truly pious ; I say, the opposition Mr. Williams makes to this argument is frivolous, since he in effect grants the same thing (as above) yea, does expressly allow, that they must make pretences of being God's real friends, and *loving* God more than the world. p. 36.

15. If it be true as Mr. Williams allows and abundantly asserts, " That in order to persons' being admitted to holy communion in special ordinances, the scripture has determined, that there must be an open profession and declaration of a PERSON's believing, *or of a personal believing*, in Christ (*which is the same thing*) and of an hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace,* and that therein must be a profession of gospel holiness ;" then avails nothing to the contrary that great argument of his, taken from the state of *baptized infants*, That " They are already in the church, and in covenant, and are members in complete standing," &c. And that therefore no owning the covenant or professing godliness can be demanded of them :† And in vain is all that he has said to prove this in his discourse on the *Wheat* and *Tares*.‡

16. To what purpose is it, to object from the parable now mentioned, That the church ought not to go about to make a distinction between *wheat* and *tares*, in their admission of members, by pretending to discern the difference ? When it

§ p. 126. ¶ p. 128. ** p. 131. †† p. 131.

* See how Mr. Williams expresses himself p. 5. † See especially, p. 3.

‡ p. 99, 100.

is so apparent, that there is no pretence to any proper discerning in the case, nor any other distinction pleaded, than what is made by a judgment of charity. And when, according to Mr. Williams's own scheme, churches are obliged to make a distinction, in the rational judgment they pass, and to admit none but what they judge to be true saints; so that those who are *wheat*, in the eye of their judgment, only are to be admitted, and such as are *tares*, in the eye of their judgment, are to be excluded.

17. What is said by Mr. Williams of the visible church's being the *school of Christ*, and men's being admitted into it as "Disciples or scholars, some of them in order to attain grace," (p. 81, and 83) is nothing to the purpose, if it be as Mr. Williams allows and asserts, that in order to be admitted into this *school*, they must be supposed in a reasonable judgment, to have this attainment already, and make a pretence to it, and a solemn profession of it, and must give moral evidence that they have it, and must be admitted into the school under no other notion than that of their being already possessed of it.

18. If it be as Mr. Williams expressly says, "That persons are not visible saints without a credible profession, visibility and moral evidence, not only of moral sincerity, but true holiness," (p. 139.) then all is wholly insignificant and vain, that is said to prove, that the children of Israel were visible saints without any evidence of such holiness, by reason of the idolatry and gross and open wickedness of vast multitudes of them who are yet called God's people: And so likewise, all that is said to prove that the members of the primitive Church had no other visibility of saintship than they, *because they are grafted into the same olive:* And also all that Mr. Williams has said to prove, that many of the members of the primitive churches were as grossly wicked as they.

19. Since according to Mr. Williams the terms of admission to the Jewish ordinances, were "the same as to Christian ordinances, the like profession and the same visibility of saintship required and no other;" as he strenuously asserts, p. 57, 61, 65; it will therefore follow from his foregoing concessions

Christ, such as subjected themselves to Christ with
hearts, and gave up themselves to him to be rul
and led by him; such as with all their hearts cast
on the mercy of God to enable them to keep cover
as professed to love God above the world, and profe
than common faith and moral sincerity, even true h
al piety; and who gave moral evidence, that they
qualification; and were received to the *passover*,
that notion, and with respect to such a character ap
them, and apprehended *to be in them*." And if th
are so, what is become of the argument from th
and circumcision against the necessity of the quali
have insisted on!

29. To what purpose does Mr. Williams ins
"That we read not a word in scripture about Joh
tist's making any inquiry, whether the people
made a credible profession of true piety?" When
insists that in order to admission to Christian s
"Men must make a credible profession of true pie
why does he urge (p. 96, 97) That the profession
made which John baptized, did not imply that they
repentance, but only an engagement to repent,
When he himself holds that in order

and a credible profession of gospel holiness;" and since he might not lawfully come without some qualifications he had not, viz. *such a friendship for Christ, as is above lukewarmness*, and above *serving two masters*, Christ and mammon, and a giving up all his *heart and life to Christ*, and *a real determination of his judgment and affections for Christ's word*, &c.

22. If it be true, as Mr. Williams allows, that ministers and churches ought not to admit adult persons to sacraments, without *a pious character appearing on them, and their professing and exhibiting moral evidence of gospel holiness*, then no good argument can be brought against such a way of admission, from the success of ministers in another way, or in any way whatsoever.

Besides these plain and obvious consequences of Mr. Williams's concessions, some other consequences will hereafter be observed under particular heads.

Thus Mr. Williams has not only abundantly given up the main point in that controversy I have lately been engaged in, and the main point which I have written in defence of; but he has in effect given up every point belonging to the whole controversy, every thing material insisted on through that whole book which he undertakes to answer. He has established every part of the scheme I have appeared in, and every particular argument I have used to confirm it; and answered, and overthrown every argument which he brings or pretends to support against it. And I should have no further occasion to say any thing in reply to him, if he had not really through great part of his performance, argued for other things, opposite to those that have been rehearsed, which he so strenuously insists belong to his scheme; which arguing may seem to support another scheme, though nothing akin to his, any otherwise than as his scheme is indeed a mixture of many schemes, one clashing with, and destroying another; as will appear in the ensuing part of this reply.

## SECTION III.

### *The* Inconsistence *of the forementioned Concessions with the Lawfulness of* unsanctified *Persons coming to the Lord's Supper, and their Right to Sacraments in the sight of God.*

MR. WILLIAMS in the book under consideration, which he entitles *the true state of the question*, insists upon it that the question to be debated is the question Mr. Stoddard debated in his dispute with Dr. Mather; in whose scheme Mr. Williams declares himself to be. Mr. Stoddard in his dispute with Dr. Mather asserted, "that it was lawful for some unsanctified men to come to the Lord's supper, and that they had a right so to do in the sight of God." And he declares that this was the point in dispute between him and Dr. Mather; as in *Appeal*, p. 20. "That which I am to shew is, that some unsanctified men have a right before God to the Lord's supper." So Mr. Blake (who is so great an author with Mr. Williams) says, in his treatise *on the covenant*, p. 244. "That faith which is the condition of the promise, is not the condition *in Foro dei* (before God) of a title to the seal." And there (in the next p.) he insists, that "it is a common faith, that is believed by men not justified," which gives this title. Agreeably to these things Mr. Williams says (p. 132) some men have "a lawful right to the sacrament without sanctification." Which is the same thing as to say, *they have a right in the sight of God.* For if they have *no right in the sight of God* to come to the Lord's supper, then *it is not lawful in the sight of God* that they should come.

Here I would lay down this as a maxim;

There is some inward religion and virtue or other, some sincerity of heart, either moral or saving, that is necessary to a right to sacraments in the sight of God, and in order to a lawful coming to them. No man, I trust, will say, that a man has a right in God's sight, who has no sort of serious

ness of mind; and that merely outward sounds and motions, give him this right in God's sight, without regard to any property or quality of mind, and though this outward shew is joined with the most horrid and resolved secret irreligion and wickedness. Mr. Williams in particular utterly disclaims such doctrine as this in 3d and 4th pages of his preface, and always maintains that in order to men's lawful coming, they must be *morally sincere*; as there in his preface, and also in p. 25, 27, 30, 35, 111. In p. 115, he supposes, that if a man *makes a doubt of his moral sincerity, no divine will advise him to come until he knows.*

Having observed this, I now desire it may be considered, whether it be reasonable to suppose, as Mr. Williams does, that God would give men that are without grace, a lawful right to sacraments, so that this qualification itself should be nothing necessary to a proper and rightful claim to these ordinances; and yet that he would wholly forbid them to come, and others to admit them, without their making some pretence to it, and exhibiting moral evidence that they have it: That moral sincerity is the qualification which by God's own appointment invests persons with a lawful right to sacraments, and that by his institution nothing more is requisite to a lawful right; and yet that he has commanded them not to come, nor others to allow them to come, without making a profession of something *more* than moral sincerity, as Mr. Williams says. Mr. Williams supposes that God requires us, before we admit persons, to seek credible evidence of true piety, and to see to it that we have reasonable ground to believe they have it; otherwise, not to allow them to come: And yet that God does not look on such a qualification requisite in itself, when all is done, and that he has given them as true and lawful a right to come without it, as with it. If God insists upon it, as Mr. Williams supposes, that members should be admitted *under no other notion* than of their being truly godly, *and from respect to such a character appearing on them*, is it not plain, that God looks on such a character in itself requisite, in order to a persons's being a rightful subject of such a privilege? If the want of this qualification does not in the least hinder a

person's lawful right to a thing, on what account can the want of an appearance of it and pretence to it, warrant and oblige others to hinder his taking possession of that thing?

That we should be obliged to require a credible pretence and evidence of the being of a thing, in order to a certain purpose, the being of which is not requisite to that purpose; or that some evidence of a thing should be necessary, and yet withal no necessity there should be any foundation of such evidence, in the being of the thing to be made evident; that it should be necessary for us to seek evidence that something is true, and yet there be no need in order to the intended purpose, that there be any such truth to be made evident; *If* these things are the dictates of common sense, I am willing all that are possessed of any degree of common sense should be judges.

If God has plainly revealed, that gospel holiness is not necessary in itself in order to men's lawful right to sacraments, as Mr. Williams greatly insists, then his churches need not *believe it to be necessary*; yea, it is their duty *to believe that it is* not *necessary*, as it is their duty to believe what God says to be true. But yet Mr. Williams holds, that God forbids his churches to admit any to sacraments, unless they first have some rational evidence obliging them *to believe that they have gospel holiness*. Now how palpable is the inconsistence, that we must be obliged to believe men have a qualification in order to our suffering them to come, which yet at the same time we need not believe to be necessary for them to have in order to their coming, but which God requires us to believe to be unnecessary? Or in other words, that God has made it necessary for us to believe or suppose men are truly pious, in order to our lawfully allowing them to take the sacraments, and yet at the same time requires us to believe no such thing as their being pious is necessary in order to their lawfully taking the sacraments?

Mr. Stoddard (whose principles Mr. Williams in preface, p. 3, declares himself to be fully established in) not only says, that some unsanctified men have "a right before God to the Lord's Supper," but strongly asserts, over and over, "that

they are FIT to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, that they are DULY QUALIFIED, FIT MATTER for church membership," (Appeal, p. 15, 16) and Mr. Williams argues that "such qualifications as some unsanctified men have, are SUFFICIENT to bring them into the church." Now if it be so, what business have we to demand evidence or a pretence of any thing further? What case in the world can be mentioned parallel to it, in any nation or age? Arethere any such laws or rugulations to be found in any society, nation, city or family, civil society, military or academic, stated society or occasional, that the society should be required to insist on some credible pretence and evidence of a certain qualification, in order to persons being admitted to the privileges of the society; prohibiting their being admitted *under any other notion* than as persons possessed of that qualification, or *without a respect, in their admission, to such a character appearing on them:* And yet at the same time, by the laws of that very society, or the head of it, that qualification is not necessary; but persons are declared, without any such qualification, to have a LAWFUL RIGHT, to be FIT MATTER, to be DULY QUALIFIED, and to have SUFFICIENT qualifications to be admitted to these privileges, without that qualification?

If some men have a right in the sight of God to sacraments, without true piety, and are *fit*, and *duly qualified* without it, in his sight, and by his institution, and yet the church must not admit them unless they are truly pious in their sight; then the eye of man must require higher terms, than the infinitely holy eye of God himself; they must look for something that the eye of God looks not for, and which he judges them duly qualified without.

Mr. Williams when speaking of the evidence, on which he supposes the church ought to judge persons to be real saints, from time to time adds, that on such evidence "the church is obliged, in their external carriage, *to treat them as saints*, and admit them to the external privileges of the church." So p. 9, 12, &c. p. 13 and 14, and in other places. But what does he mean by treating them *as saints*, in admitting them to the external privileges of the church? If *sinners* have as much

of a lawful right to these privileges, as *saints*, then why is giving them these privileges a treating them as *saints*, any more than as *sinners*? If it belongs to an ignorant child, to be admitted into school, as much as one that is learned, then how is it treating him as one that is learned, to admit *him*? Mr. Williams (p. 11) giving a reason why he that professes conviction of the truth of the gospel, &c. ought to be admitted to sacraments, says, "though this conviction may be only by moral evidence and common illumination, yet the church know not but it is done on a divine and gracious discovery." But how can this be a reason? What if the church *did know* that it was not on a gracious discovery, if the man has a right in the sight of God without, and God has made it his duty to come to sacraments without? Surely the church have no right to forbid him to do that which God has given *him* a right to do, and made it his duty to do; as Mr. Stoddard says, (*Doct. of Inst. Churches*, p. 20) "The church may not hinder any man from doing his duty."

Therefore if this be Mr. Stoddard's question, "whether some unsanctified men may lawfully come to the Lord's supper," and if this be the grand point in dispute, the thing which Mr. Williams undertakes to maintain, as he often declares, then it is most plainly evident, that in conceding and asserting those things forementioned, he does in effect abundantly give up that which he himself insists on as the grand point in controversy; and so makes void and vain all his own labor, and for himself effectually confutes all that he has written.

## SECTION IV.

### *Concerning Mr.* Williams's *Notion of a public Profession of Godliness in terms of an* indeterminate *and* double *Signification.*

ACCORDING to Mr. Williams the profession of godliness must be in words not of a determinate meaning, or "without any discrimination in the meaning of the words, obliging us to understand them of saving religion." P. 6, They must make an "open declaration of their sincere consent to the terms of the covenant, without any discrimination, by which it can be determined, that the consent signified by the words is a gracious consent." P. 9, And "without any marks of difference, or any distinction in the words, whereby we can be enabled to judge when they mean a saving faith, and when a different one." P. 10, 50 and 53, That "nothing should be expressed in the words of the profession, but what some unsanctified men may say, and speak true." P. 47, he supposes, that the primitive Christians in the profession they made of faith, did not *speak only in that sense*, viz. so as to signify justifying faith; and that "the persons admitted did not understand that their profession was understood by those that admitted them, only in that sense." P. 58.

Agreeably to this notion of making a profession in words of indiscriminate meaning, and professing godliness without godliness, and yet speaking true, Mr. Williams, (in p. 44) allows, "that men must be by profession godly persons, in order to come to the sacrament;" and yet in the next sentence he denies, "that Christian grace itself is requisite in the person who is to come to the sacrament, or that the dictate of his conscience that he has it, is the thing that gives him a right to offer himself." And agreeably to this last clause, Mr. Stoddard (of whose opinion Mr. Williams professes himself fully to be) expressly maintains, that a man "may and ought to come to the Lord's supper, though he knows himself to be

in a natural condition." (*Doct. of Inst. Churches*, p. 21, see also his sermon on this controversy, p. 13.) So that putting these things together, it must be agreeable to Mr. Williams's scheme, that a man has a right to make a profession of godliness, without having godliness, and without any dictate *of his* conscience that he has the thing he professes, yea though he knows he has it not! And all this is made out by the doctrine of professing godliness in words that are ambiguous, and of two meanings.

This notion of a solemn profession of godliness, in words of a double meaning, *without any marks of difference in their signification*, is the great peculiarity of Mr. Williams's scheme; and in all his controversy with me, this appears to be the main hinge of the whole affair. Therefore I would particularly consider it.

And for the greater distinctness and clearness, I will lay down certain positions, as of most evident truth; observing some of their no less plain and evident consequences.

Position I. Words declare or profess nothing any otherwise than by their signification: For to declare or profess something by words, is to signify something by words....And therefore if nothing is signified by words of a pretended profession, nothing is really professed; and if something be professed, no more is professed than the words of the *profession* signify or import.

Position. II. If a man goes about, to declare or profess any particular thing by words which have no distinguishing signification, or without any signs or discriminating marks by which men may be enabled to distinguish what he means, *his* words are vain to the pretended purpose, and wholly fail of answering the end of words, which is to convey the thing meant, to others' understanding, or to give notice to others of the thing that is to be supposed or understood.*

* The Apostle Paul says, 1 Cor. xiv. 7, "Even things without life, giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?"—Mr. Locke says, *Hum. Und.* Vol 2. Edit. 7 p, 103. "He that uses words of any language without DISTINCT ideas in his mind, to which he applies them, does so far as he uses them in discourse, only make a noise without any sense or signification."

Therefore to use words thus in common conversation, is to act in a vain trifling manner, more like children than men: But to use words thus in the sacred services of God's house, and solemn duties of his worship, is something much worse than children's play. But thus Mr. Williams expressly declares, words are to be used in a public profession of religion. He says (p. 10.) "And these words are so used in such cases, without any marks of difference, whereby we are enabled to judge when they mean a saving faith, and when a different one."

Position III. A profession made in words that are either equivocal, or general, equally signifying several distinct things, without any marks of difference or distinction, by which we are enabled to judge which is meant, is not a profession or signification of *any one* of those several things; nor can they afford any rational ground of understanding or apprehending any *particular thing*. Thus, for instance, if a man, using an equivocal term, should say, that such an evening a king was in that room, without any marks of difference or discrimination whatsoever, by which others could discern whether by a king, he meant the ruler of a kingdom, or a king used in a game of chess: The word thus used would be no declaration that the head of a kingdom was there at such a time; nor would they give any notice of any such thing to those to whom he spoke, or give them any rational ground to understand or judge any such thing.

Or if a man should use a *general* term, comprehending various particular sorts, without at all distinguishing or pointing forth any one particular sort, he thereby professes no one particular sort. Thus if a man professes that he has metal in his pocket, not saying what sort of metal, whether gold, silver, brass, iron, lead, or tin; his words are no profession that he has gold.

So if a man professes sincerity or religion, designedly using terms of double signification, or (which comes to the same thing) of general signification, equally signifying two entirely

distinct things, either *moral sincerity*, or *real piety*, his words are no profession of real piety; he makes no credible profession, and indeed no profession at all of *gospel holiness*.

Position IV. If a man who knows himself to be destitute of any certain qualification, yet makes a profession or pretence, in words of double meaning, equally signifying that qualification, and something else very different with a design to recommend himself to others' judgment, as possessed of that qualification, he is guilty of deceitful equivocation. This is the notion of deceitful equivocation, viz. the using words of double meaning, or capable of double application, with a design to induce others to judge something to be true, which is not true. But he that goes about to recommend himself by such terms to others' opinion or judgment as being what he at the same time knows he is not, endeavors to induce them to believe what he knows is not true, which is to deceive them.*

But if the scheme which Mr. Williams undertakes to defend, were true, it would follow that such a kind of equivocation as this (be it far from us to suppose it) is what the infinitely wise and holy God has instituted to be publicly made use of in the solemn services of his house, as the very condition of persons' admission to the external privileges of his people! For Mr. Williams abundantly asserts, that persons must be *esteemed* in the judgment and apprehension of others to have true piety; and that one thing that must *be done in order to it*, one thing pertaining to the moral evidence that *recommends* them to this judgment, is the profession they make of religion. (P. 5, 139, 47, 132, 44.) In p. 42, speaking of the profession of visible Christians, he has these words, "And it is from the nature and purport of this profession, we say, the church is to judge the members to be wise virgins or what they make a show of." And Mr. Williams insists upon it that according to Christ's institution, this must be in

* "To advance a dubious proposition, knowing it will be understood in a sense different from what you give it in your mind, is an *equivocation*, in breach of good faith and sincerity." *Chambers's Dictionary*, under the word *equivocation*.

words equally signifying true godliness, and something else, without any discrimination or marks of difference. This is the scheme! And certainly such a doctrine of deceitful equivocation in the public exercises of religion, is more agreeable to the principles and practices of a religion I am loth to name, than the true religion of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Williams says, p. 35, "I am at a loss to conceive how it will help the cause of truth to represent those who are of Mr. Stoddard's opinion, as teaching men that they enter into covenant with God with known and allowed guile." Supposing I had made such a representation, I can tell him how it would have helped the cause of truth (as it would be speaking nothing but the truth) if he be one of Mr. Stoddard's opinion (as he says he is) and represents his own opinion truly.

But let the unreasonableness of this notion of professing gospel holiness in words of two meanings, without any discrimination or mark of difference, be a little further considered. Since it is allowed that gospel holiness is the thing which is to be exhibited in the profession, and there are words which signify this by a determinate meaning, why must they needs be avoided, and words of doubtful and double signification only made use of?* Since the design of the profession is to exhibit to others' understanding that very thing; if the proper and distinguishing names of that must nevertheless be avoided in the profession, and this, for that very reason, that they point forth to others understanding that very thing by a determinate meaning; then we are brought to this gross absurdity, viz. That the end of a profession is to exhibit to others' understanding and reasonable judgment a *particular qualification*; but at the same time such words only must be made use of as do not distinctly point forth to others' understanding and judgment that *particular qualification*. The church are to seek and demand a profession, that shall determine their *rational judgment*; but yet are designedly to

* Mr. Williams (p. 6) speaks of a profession in terms of indiscriminate signification, when not contradicted in life, as "The sole entire evidence, which the church, as a church, is to have, by divine appointment, in order to that public judgment it is to make of the sainthip of men.

avoid such a profession as shall *determine their understandings*. Be it far from us to attribute to the allwise God any such absurd and inconsistent constitution.

Mr. Williams says, "Charity obliges the church to understand the words of the professors in the most favorable sense." But charity does not oblige us to understand their words in any other sense than that in which they professedly use them. But in churches which professedly act on Mr. Williams's scheme (if any such there be) the professors who are admitted, professedly use ambiguous words, or words equally signifying two entirely distinct things, without discrimination or marks of difference; and therefore charity obliges us to understand their words no otherwise, than as signifying that they have one or other of those two things; and not that they have one in particular: For their words do not signify this, in the sense they professedly use them. If a man that is indebted to me, professes that he has either gold or brass, which he promises to pay me; or if he uses an equivocal or general term, that equally, and without marks of difference, signifies either one or the other: Charity may oblige me to believe what he says, which is that he has either gold or brass; but no charity obliges me to believe that he has gold, which he does not say.

Mr. Williams, in his description of such a profession as Christ has instituted, in order to admission to sacraments, often mentions two things, viz. "A profession of something *present*, a present believing in Christ, and cordial consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, &c. And a promise of something *future*." And with regard to the latter he is very full in it, that what is promised for time to come is *saving faith, repentance and obedience*.† Now what reason can be given why we should use words of double meaning in the former part of the profession more than in the latter. Seeing Mr. Williams allows that we must *profess* gospel holiness as well as *promise* it, and seeing we may and must make use of words of indiscriminate and double meaning in professing

† Preface, p. 3, 5, 24, 25, 22, 7, 58, 69.

present gospel holiness, why should we not do so too in promising what is future; and so equivocate in our solemn vows and oaths as the Papists do? If Mr. Williams says it is very hard for men to discern the discrimination between moral sincerity and gospel holiness; I answer there is as much need to discern the difference in order understandingly to *promise* gospel holiness with discrimination, as to *profess* it with discrimination.

Mr. Williams says, (p. 8) "It is a received rule among mankind, in all public judgments, to interpret words in the most extensive and favorable sense, that the nature of the words or expressions will bear. I know not what he means: But if he means (as he must if he means any thing to the purpose) that it is a received rule amongst mankind, to trust or accept, or regard any professions or declarations that men make with professed design, in words of double and indiscriminate meaning, without any marks of difference by which their meaning can be known, for that very end that they may be used with a safe conscience, though they have no dictates of their own consciences, that they have that which others are to believe they have; I say, if this be a received rule among mankind, it is a rule that mankind has lately received from Mr. Williams. Heretofore mankind, societies, or particular persons, would have been counted very foolish for regarding such professions. Is this the way in earthly kingdoms, in professions of allegiance to temporal princes, in order to their admission to the privileges of good subjects? Do they chuse equivocal terms to put into their oaths of allegiance, to that end that men may use them and speak true, though they are secret enemies? There are two competitors for the kingdom of this world, *Christ* and *Satan*: The design of a public profession of religion is, to declare on which side men are. And is it agreeable to the custom of mankind in such cases, to make laws that no other than ambiguous words shall be used or to accept of such in declarations of this kind? There are two competitors for the kingdom of Greatbritain, king George, and the Pretender: Is it then the constitution of king George and the British Parliament, that men should take

oaths of allegiance, contrived in words of indeterminate signification, to the end that men who are in their hearts enemies to king George, and friends to the Pretender, may use them and speak true? And certainly mankind, those of them that have common sense, never in any affairs of life look on such professions worth a rush. Would Mr. Williams himself, if tried, in any affair wherein his temporal interest is concerned, trust such professions as these? If any man that he has dealings with, should profess to him that he had pawned for him, in a certain place, an hundred pounds, evidently, yea, professedly using the expression as an ambiguous one, so that there is no understanding by it, what is pawned there, whether an hundred pound in money, or an hundred weight of stones: If he should inquire of the man what he meant, and he should reply, you have no business to *search my heart*, or *to go to turn my heart inside out*; you are obliged in charity to understand my words *in the most favorable sense*; would Mr. Williams in this case stick to his own *received rule?* Would he regard such a profession, or run the venture of one *sixpence* upon it? Would he not rather look on such a man as affronting him, and treating him as though he would make a fool of him? And would not he know, that every body else would think him a fool, if he should suffer himself to be gulled by such professions, in things which concern his *own private* interest? And yet it seems, this is the way in which he thinks he ought to conduct himself as a minister of Christ, and one entrusted by him in affairs wherein his honor and the interests of his kingdom are concerned.

And now I desire it may be judged by such as are possessed of human understanding, and are not disabled by prejudice from exercising it, whether this notion of Mr. Williams's of making a solemn profession of gospel holiness in words of indiscriminate meaning be not too absurd to be received by the reason God has given mankind. This peculiar notion of his is apparently the life and soul of his scheme; the main pillar of his temple, on which the whole weight of the building rests, which if it be broken, the whole falls to the ground. For if this notion of his be disapproved, then, inasmuch as it is

agreed, that true godliness must be professed it will follow, that it must be professed in words properly signifying the thing by a determinate meaning, which therefore no ungodly men can use, and speak true; and that therefore men must have true godliness in order to a right in the sight of God to make such profession, and to receive the privileges depending thereon: Which implies and infers all those principles of mine which Mr. Williams opposes in his book, and confutes all that he says in opposition to them.

## SECTION V.

### *Shewing that Mr.* Williams, *in supposing that unsanctified Men may profess such things, as he allows must be professed, and yet speak* true, *is inconsistent with Mr.* Stoddard, *and with himself.*

MR. WILLIAMS denies, that in order to men's being admitted to sacraments, they need make any peculiar profession, distinguished from what an unregenerate man may make, p. 44, 50, 6, 9, 10, 45, 46 and 53, or that they need to profess "any thing but what an unregenerate man may say, and speak true," p. 47. And that they need make no profession but what is "compatible with an unregenerate state, p. 8. And yet the reader has seen what things he says all must profess in order to come to sacraments. One thing he says they must profess, is "a real conviction of the heart, of the divine truth of God's word; that they do sincerely and with all their hearts believe the gospel." And these things he says, are agreeable to the opinion of Mr. Stoddard. and the doctrine he taught, p. 32 and 36. Let us compare these things with the doctrine Mr. Stoddard taught. Mr. Stoddard taught, that natural men do not "believe the gospel." *Ben. of the Gosp.* 89. That they "do not properly believe the word of God,"

*Guide to Christ*, p. 26. That "they do not believe the testimony of God, do not lay weight on the word of God; that they do not believe the report of the gospel." *Safety of Ap.* Edit. 2. p. 229. That they do "not receive God's testimony, nor lay weight on it." (Ibid p. 99, that "There is no man, how great soever his profession, how large soever his knowledge that continues in a natural condition, who thoroughly believes that truth;" i. e. that men may be saved by Christ's righteousness. Ibid. p. 4 and 5. That "common illumination does not convince men of the truth of the gospel." *Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 148, 149. How then could it be the doctrine Mr. Stoddard taught, that natural men may really and with all their hearts believe and be convinced of the truth of the gospel?

And Mr. Williams himself in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 144, 115, says, "man since the fall is naturally ignorant of divine truth, and an enemy to it, and full of prejudices against the truth." And says, further, Ibid. p. 114. "The renewing of the Holy Ghost makes an universal change of the heart and life....He knows the doctrine contained in the bible in a new manner....Before he had a view of the truth as a *doubtful uncertain thing*; he received it as a thing which was probably true;—and perhaps for the most part it appeared something likely to answer the end proposed. But now the gospel appears to him *divinely true* and *real*, &c." But how do these things consist with men's being before conversion, sincerely and with all their hearts convinced of the divine truth of the gospel? Can that be, and yet men *view it as a doubtful, uncertain thing*, it not yet appearing to them *divinely true and real?*

Again, Mr. Williams supposes, that some unsanctified men may speak true, and profess "an hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, a compliance with the call of the gospel, submission to the proposals of it, satisfaction with that device for our salvation that is revealed in the gospel, and with the offer which God makes of himself to be our God in Christ Jesus, a fervent desire of Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace, and an earnest purpose and resolution to

seek salvation on the terms of it, (p. 11) and a falling in with the terms of salvation proposed in the gospel, with a renouncing of all other ways (which he speaks of as agreeable to Mr. Stoddard's opinion, p. 32.) Quite contrary to the current doctrine of Calvinistic divines; contrary to the opinion of Mr. Guthrie, whom he cites as a witness in his favor, (Pref. p. 4) who insists on satisfaction with that device for our salvation which is revealed in the gospel, and with the offer which God makes of himself to be our God in Christ, as the peculiar nature of saving faith. And contrary to the principles of Mr. Perkins (another author he quotes as his voucher) delivered in these very words, which Mr. Williams cites in the present point, (p. 11) "That a desire of the favor and mercy of God in Christ, and the means to attain that favor, is a special grace of God, and hath the promise of blessedness:....That wicked men cannot sincerely desire these means of eternal life, *faith*, *repentance*, mortification, reconciliation, &c." And exceeding contrary to the constant doctrine of Mr. Stoddard, (though he says it was his opinion) who ever insisted, that all unconverted sinners under the gospel are so far from heartily consenting to the covenant of grace, and complying with the call of the gospel, and falling in with the terms of salvation proposed in it, renouncing all other ways, as Mr. Williams supposes, that they are wilful rejectors of Christ, despisers of the gospel, and obstinate refusers of offered mercy. So he says, "the man that has but common grace....sets himself against the way of salvation which God prescribes." *Nat. of Sav. Conv.* p. 10. "In awakened sinners, it is not merely from weakness, but from pride and sturdiness of spirit, that they do not come to Christ." *Safety of Ap.* p. 229. And in other places he says, that it is "from the hardness and stubbornness of natural men's hearts," that they do not comply with the gospel: That "there is a mighty opposition in their hearts to believe in Christ," because it is "cross to their haughty spirit: That they are enemies to this way of salvation: That they are dreadfully averse to come to Christ." See Book of 3 *Sermons*, p. 84. *Guide to Christ*, p. 55. *Safety of Ap.* p. 106, and 194.

And this scheme of our author is in a no less glaring manner contrary to the doctrine of Mr. Williams himself, in his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11. (p. 25, 26, 27. Speaking to those "whose natures remain unrenewed and unsanctified. See his words, p. 25, he says p. 27. "You are opposing *all the* means of your own deliverance and salvation. The offers of grace, the allurements and invitations of the great Saviour of the world, have all been ineffectual to persuade you to accept of deliverance from a slavery you are willingly held in. Nay, you strive against the liberty of the sons of God, and labor to find out all manner of difficulties and hindrances in the way of it. If you pray for it, you do not desire it should yet come, but would stay a while longer,". And are these the persons who can truly profess, that they comply with the call of the gospel, and submit to the proposals of it, and are satisfied with the device for our salvation, and with the offers of the gospel, and consent to the terms of the covenant of grace *with all their hearts*, renouncing all other ways?....It is not much more easy to make these things consist with what he says in his answer to Mr. Croswell, (p. 26.) he there says, "there is not a son nor daughter of Adam excluded from salvation, who will accept Christ upon God's offer, and take him in his person and offices, and whole work of redemption, to be their Saviour, and they find themselves willing to accept of Christ as so offered to them, and PLEASED WITH THAT DEVICE for their salvation, and heartily choosing him to be to them and in them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." See also to the same purpose, Ibid. p. 32, 33, and 94.

Mr. Williams, though he holds, that it is lawful for some unsanctified men to come to sacraments, yet supposes it not to be lawful for those that are *lukewarm* in religion to come. P. 35. So that according to his scheme, some unsanctified professors are above *lukewarmness*; that is to say, their hearts within them are truly hot or fervent with Christian zeal, and they such as Christ will never spue out of his mouth; in a great inconsistence with the scripture. He suggests, that it is an injury done to the cause of truth, in me, to repre-

sent Mr. Stoddard as being of another opinion, (p. 35) but let us see whether such a representation be an injury to truth or no. Mr. Stoddard taught, that natural men have "no sincerity in them." *Guide to Christ* p. 60, 61. That "their hearts are dead as a stone, that there is no disposition or inclination to any thing that is good, but a total emptiness of all goodness." Ibid. p. 63. That "some of them have considerable shews of goodness, there is an appearance of good desires, &c. but there is nothing of goodness in all this; that all they do is in hypocrisy," *Benef. of the Gosp.* 73. That "they are acted by a lust of selflove in all their religion: If they are swept and garnished, they are empty: There may be some similitude of faith and love, but no reality, not a spark of goodness in their hearts; though corruption may be restrained, yet it reigns." He speaks abundantly to the same purpose in his sermon, entitled, *Natural men are under the government of selflove.*

And Mr. Williams himself in his sermon on Psal. xci. 1. describing carnal men, by which he means the same with unconverted men (as is evident through the book, particularly p. 36) he says, p. 27, 28. That to such "religion looks like a dull, unpleasant kind of exercise, and so different from the sensual joys and pleasures which they choose, that they *hate* to set about it, as long as they dare let it alone; and would do as little as ever they can at it: That when they durst not let it alone any longer, they set about it, but would fain dispatch it as *soon*, and as *easily* as they can; because it seems to them a *miserable*, *uncomfortable* sort of life. Ask your own conscience (says he) see if this be not the *truth* of the case." Now let the reader judge, whether this be a description of persons whom it would be injurious to represent as having nothing above *lukewarmness*.

Another thing, which Mr. Williams supposes must be professed in order to come to sacraments, and therefore according to him is what an unsanctified man can profess, and speak true, is, "That they with all their hearts cast themselves upon the mercy of God, to help them to keep covenant." P. 31 and 32. And yet elsewhere he mentions a depending on

Christ for things of this nature, as a discriminating mark of a true Christian. Ser. on *Christ a king and witness*, p. 19. Under a use of examination, he there says, "Do you depend on Christ to protect you from all your spiritual enemies, to restore you to holiness, to subdue all your heart to the will of God, to make you partakers of his image and moral perfections, and in that way to preserve and lead you to your true perfection and eternal happiness?"

Mr. Williams supposes, p. 36, that the profession men must make in order to come to sacraments, implies *real friendship* to God, "loving God more than his enemies, loving him above the world;" and therefore according to Mr. Williams, unsanctified men may make this profession also, *and speak true*; contrary to the whole current of scripture, which represents unsanctified men as "the enemies of God, those that have not the love of God in them, under the power of a carnal mind, &c." And contrary to the unanimous voice of all sound divines, yea, of the whole Christian world. Mr. Williams in the forementioned place blames me, that I had intimated (as he supposes) that the profession which Mr. Stoddard taught to be necessary, did not imply "real friendship, and loving God above his enemies, and above the world." Let us then compare this with Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, as that is extant in his writings. He speaks of it as a "property of saving grace, wherein it specifically differs from common grace, that a true love to God prizes God above all the world. *Nat. of Conv.* p. 7. "That every natural man prefers vain and base things before God." Ibid. p. 96. "That they are all enemies to God, and the very being of God." Ibid. p. 5, and 97. "That their hearts are full of enmity to God." Ibid. p. 55. "That they have an aversion to those gracious actions of loving God, and trusting in Christ, and are under the dominion of a contrary inclination." Ibid. p. 67. "That those of them whose consciences are enlightened, and are reforming their lives, have no love; and that it is a burden to them that they suspect there is such a God, that they wish there was not such an one. And that they are haters of God, and are so addicted to their own interest, that they have a bitter spirit towards God,

have an ill affection to him, and are adversaries to his felicity." *Ibid.* p. 97. *Three Serm.* p. 38, 39. "That they are governed by a spirit of selflove, and are wholly destitute of love to God; that some of them do confess that they have but little love to God; but indeed they have not one spark of love to God in their hearts. *Three Serm.* p. 48. That they set their interest at the right hand of God's glory.....as if God's honor were not to be regarded, compared with their interest, &c. &c." *Ibid.* p. 62, 63.

So Mr. Williams himself (*Christ a king and witness*, p. 145.) plainly supposes, that before conversion, men love the world more than God. For, speaking of the nature of the change wrought in conversion, he says, "things are quite turned about, God and Christ are got into the place the world had before." Again (*Ibid.* p. 18.) he says, "You must know that there is no man who is not either a true subject to Christ, or his enemy. That man who does not submit to Christ as his King and Lord, by bearing true faith and allegiance to him, is the enemy of Christ and his kingdom. Such are all they who will not depend on him, believe in him, give up themselves, and all to him." And again, p. 106, 107. "Man, since the fall, has a natural unlikeness to God, and *hates* the holiness and purity of the divine nature." And in his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11. he says, to his hearers, "If your nature remain unrenewed and unsanctified—you are the enemies of God and Christ by wicked works, and an impure heart." But yet now it seems, some of these may profess *real friendship to Christ and loving him above the world*, and speak true.

And these things are no less inconsistent with what Mr. Williams says in the very book under consideration. He here says, p. 36. "Why should any divine now tell us, that these same professions do not imply that there are any pretences of any real friendship, that they import no pretence of loving God more, yea, not so much as his enemies, no pretence to love God above the world?" When he himself is the divine that tells us so, or plainly supposes so in this very book of his. For, in p. 8, 9, having mentioned the profession communicants may be required to make, he then says, that

"such a profession contains all that is essential to true religion in it; and if this is the fruit of the love of God, it is true godliness:" Plainly supposing, that persons may have these things without the love of God; as the reader will see more evidently if he views the place. So that the profession must imply real friendship, and love to God, even above the world; and yet must contain only such things as may be with or without the love of God, indiscriminately.

Mr. Williams allows, that in order to come to sacraments men ought to profess a "subjection to Christ with all their hearts, p. 10, and to be devoted to the service of God, p. 49, and to give up themselves to Christ, to be taught, ruled and led by him in a gospel way to salvation." P. 31 and 32. And though he and Mr. Stoddard taught, that it is lawful for some unsanctified men to come to sacraments, yet *Mr. Williams* supposes it to be unlawful for any to come to sacraments *serving two masters*; and says, Mr. Stoddard taught that they ought to covenant with God with their whole hearts, and give up all their hearts and lives to Christ." We are therefore to understand Mr. Williams, that some unsanctified men can profess all these things, *and speak true*. Strange doctrine for a Christian divine! Let us see whether Mr. Stoddard taught such doctrine. He taught that "faith in Christ is the first act of obedience, that any sinner *does perform*; that it is by faith that a man first gives himself to be God's servant." *Safety of Ap.* p. 228, 229. That "all those that are not converted, are under the dominion of sin, enemies to God." *Ibid.* p. 5. That "there is no obedience to God in what they do," who have only common grace; that "they do not attend the will of God." *Ibid.* p. 7. That "all ungodly men are servants of Satan, and live in a way of rebellion against God." *Ibid.* 94. That "they are enemies to the authority of God; to the wisdom, power and justice of God, yea, to the very Being of God; they have a preparedness of heart to all wickedness that is committed in the world, if God did not restrain them; that if they were in the circumstances that the fallen angels are in, they would be as the very devils; *Ibid.* p. 95, that their hearts are like the

hearts of devils, as full of sin as a toad is full of poison, having no inclination to any thing that is good." *Guide to Christ*, p. 58. see also *Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 108. That "they utterly neglect the end they were made for, and make it their business to serve themselves; they care not whether God's glory sinks or swims." *Three Serm.* p. 52. That "they hate God, because God crosses them in his laws." *Ibid.* p. 38. These are the men, which Mr. Williams supposes must, and may (some of them) truly profess a subjection to Christ with all their hearts, and to be devoted to Christ; and the men which he would bear us in hand, that Mr. Stoddard taught, might covenant with God with their whole hearts, and give up all their hearts and lives to Christ. Mr. Stoddard taught, that "Men that have but common grace, go quite in another path than that which God directs to."—That "they set themselves against the way of salvation God prescribes;" *Safety*. p. 10. That "man in his natural state is an enemy to the way of salvation;" That "he is an enemy to the law of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ." *Ibid.* p. 105.

But yet these, if we believe Mr. Williams, may truly profess a subjection to Christ with all their hearts, and give up themselves to him, to be taught, ruled, and led by him in a gospel way of salvation. Yet if we believe him, we must have the trouble of disbelieving him again; for in these things he is as inconsistent with himself, as he is with Mr. Stoddard. For in his Sermon on Isa. xlv. 11, p. 26, 27, he says to those whose natures are *unrenewed and unsanctified*, "If you are without Christ, you are in a state of slavery to sin, led about of divers lusts,† and under the reigning power and dominion of your corruptions, which debase your souls and bring them down from the dignity of their nature, to the vilest, most shameful and accursed bondage. And by means of sin ye are in bondage to the devil, the most hateful and accursed enemy of God and your own souls; and are opposing all the means of your own deliverance. The offers of grace,

† And yet now it seems, some such do serve but one master, and give up themselves to Christ to be led by him.

the calls and invitations of the gospel have been ineffectual to persuade you to accept of deliverance from a slavery you are willingly held in. Nay you strive against the liberty of the sons of God." And yet some of these are (if we believe what Mr. Williams now says) such as are subject to Christ with all their hearts, give up all their hearts and lives to Christ, and give up themselves to be taught, ruled, and led by him in a gospel way to salvation. Mr. Williams, in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 18, under a use of examination is giving marks of trial, says, "Have you unreservedly given up your souls and bodies to him? [viz Christ] you must *be all* Christ's and have *no other master*. You must be given to him without reserve, both in body and spirit, which are his." But now it seems these are no discriminating evidences of true piety: He says, p. 118, "A man naturally hates God should reign." And p. 119, speaking of the natural man, he says, "He hates to be controled, and in all things subjected to God. ....He really owns no God but himself." But if so, then certainly he is not subject to God with all his heart.

Our author in the book more especially attended to, says, p. 31, He "knows of nobody who has any controversy with me in *what he calls my* loose way of arguing," in my saying, "The nature of things seems to afford no good reason why the people of Christ should not openly profess a proper respect to him in their hearts, as well as a true notion of him in their heads." And then in that and the following page, proceeds to shew what respect Mr. Stoddard, and those that think with him, suppose men must profess in order to come to the Lord's supper; and in p. 33, speaks of such a profession as equally honorable to Christ with a profession of saving grace. And as according to Mr. Williams, no profession, discriminating what is professed from common grace, can be required, so common grace must be supposed to be a *proper respect to Christ in the heart*. Now let us see what Mr. Stoddard says. "There is (says he) an opposition between saving and common grace;....they have a contrariety one to another, and are at war one with the other, and would destroy one the other. Common graces are LUSTS, and do oppose saving grace."

(*Nat. of Sav. Conv.* p. 9.) "Men that are in a natural condition.....such of them as are addicted to morality and religion, are serving their LUSTS therein. The most orderly, natural men do live an *ungodly* life; yea their very *religion is iniquity.*" (*Ibid*, p. 96, 97.) "Their best works are not only sinful, but *properly sins*; they are acted by a SPIRIT OF LUST in all that they do." (*Saf. of Appr.* p. 168.) "Moral virtues do not render men acceptable to God; for though they look like virtues, yet they are LUSTS." (*Ibid.* p. 81.) Now the question plainly is, whether *Lust can be a proper respect to Christ in the heart?* And, whether a *profession* which implies *no more* in it, be equally honorable to Christ, as a credible profession of a *gracious* respect to him?

## SECTION VI.

### *Concerning visibility, without apparent probability.*

MR. STODDARD, (*Appeal* p. 16) says thus: "Such persons as the apostles did admit into gospel churches, are *fit* to be admitted into them; but they admitted *many* that had not a thorough work of regeneration. Indeed by the *rule* that God has given for admissions, if carefully attended, *more* unconverted persons will be admitted, than converted."

This passage I took notice of in my book, where I say, "I would humbly inquire, how those visible qualifications can be the ground of a rational judgment, that a person is circumcised in heart; which nevertheless, at the same time, we are sensible, are so far from being probable signs of it, that they are more frequently without it, than with it," &c. This seems to be a terrible thing in Mr. Williams's way, which he strikes at from time to time; and is an impediment, he boggles at exceedingly. One while he pretends, he can give a sufficient answer; p. 7, 8. At another time he pretends, that I remove the difficulty myself; p. 12. Then again, in the same

page he pretends to solve the difficulty; and then in the next page pretends, that if the case be as I say, "That we cannot form a rational judgment that a thing is, which at the same time, and under that degree of light we then stand in, it is more probable is a mistaken one, than not," yet it can argue nothing to the case; seeing the judgment we do form, is directed by a rule which is appointed for us. But still, as if not satisfied with these answers and remarks, he seems afterwards to suggest that Mr. Stoddard did not express this as *his own* sentiment, but as Mr. Cotton's, as a gentleman of the same principles with Mr. Mather, using it as *argumentum ad hominem*. See p. 33.

In p. 34, he expressly says, "Mr. Stoddard does not say, that when the rule which God has given for admissions is carefully attended, it leaves reason to believe, that the greater part of those who are admitted, are *enemies to God*, &c." [True, he does not say this in terms; but he says, "More *unconverted* persons will be admitted than converted;" which is equivalent.] And in p. 133, Mr. Williams presumes confidently to affirm, that "Mr. Stoddard says this [the thing forementioned] not with peculiar relation to his own scheme, but only as an application of a saying of Mr. Cotton's, who was of a different opinion, and said upon a different scheme; to shew that upon their own principles, the matter will not be mended." But this is contrary to the most plain fact. For Mr. Stoddard having said "The apostles admitted many *unconverted*," he immediately adds the passage in dispute, "Indeed by the rule," &c. plainly expressing his own sentiment; though he *back's* it with a saying of Mr. Cotton. So Mr. Cotton's words come in as a confirmation of Mr. Stoddard's; and not Mr. Stoddard's as an *application* of Mr. Cotton's. However, Mr. Williams delivers the same sentiment *as his own*, once and again in his book: He delivers it as his own sentiment, p. 34, "That probably many more hypocrites, than real saints, do make such a profession, as that which must be accepted." He delivers it as his own sentiment, p. 61, That "The apostles judged it likely that of the Christians taken into the church under their direction, as many were hypocrites

in proportion to their number, as of those that were taken into the Jewish church." And as to the latter, he delivers it as his sentiment, p. 24, that "The body of the people were not regenerate." So that, according to his own sentiments, when the Apostolic rule of taking in is observed, the body of those who are admitted will be hypocrites.

Now therefore, I desire that this matter may be examined to the very bottom. And here let it be considered, whether the truth of the following things are not incontestable.

1. If indeed by the rule God has given for admissions, when it is carefully attended, more unconverted persons will be admitted than converted; then it will follow, that just such a visibility, or visible appearance of saintship as *the rule requires*, is more frequently *without* real saintship than *with* it.

2. If Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams had just reason from the holy scripture, and divine Providence to think thus, and to publish such a sentiment, and the Christian church has good reason to believe them; then God has given the Christian church in its present state (dark and imperfect as it is) good reason to *think so* too.

3. If Christ, by the rule he has given for admissions, requires his churches to receive such a visibility or appearance, which he has given the same churches, at the same time, reason to judge to be an appearance, that *for the most part* is without godliness, or more frequently connected with ungodliness; then he requires them to receive such an appearance, as he at the same time has given them reason to think does not imply a *probability* of godliness, but is attended rather with a probability of ungodliness. For that is the notion of probability: *An appearance, which, so far as we have means to judge, is for the most part connected with the thing.** Therefore the sign or appearance, let it be what it will, implies a *probability*

* Mr. Locke thus defines *probability* (*Hum. Und.* 7th edit 8vo. vol 2, p. 373.) "Probability is nothing but the appearance of such an agreement or disagreement, by the intervention of proofs, whose connexion is not constant and immutable, or at least is not perceived to be so; but is, or appears FOR THE MOST PART to be so; and is enough to induce the mind to judge the proposition to be true, or false, rather than the contrary."

of that, which we have reason to think it is for the *most part* connected or attended with. Where there is only probability without certainty, there is a *peradventure* in the case on both sides; or in vulgar language, the supposition on each side stands a chance to be true: But that side which most commonly proves true in such a case, stands the best chance; and therefore properly on that side lies the *probability*.

4. That cannot be a *credible* visibility or appearance, which is not a *probable* appearance. To say a thing is *credible* and not *probable*, is a contradiction. And it is impossible rationally to judge a thing true, and at the same time rationally to judge a thing most probably not true. Therefore it is absurd (not to say worse) to talk of any *divine institution* thus to judge. It would be to suppose, that God by his institution has made that judgment rational, which he at the same time makes improbable, and therefore irrational.

This notion of admitting members into the church of Christ without and against *probability* of true piety, is not only very inconsistent with itself, but very inconsistent with what the common light of mankind teaches in their dealings one with another. Common Sense teaches all mankind, in admission of members into societies, at least societies formed for very great and important purposes, to admit none but those, concerning whom there is an *apparent probability*, that they are the hearty friends of the society, and of the main designs and interests of it; and especially not to admit such, concerning whom there is a greater probability of their being habitual, fixed enemies. But thus it is according to Mr. Stoddard's and Mr. Williams's doctrine, as well as the doctrine of the scripture, with all *unsanctified* men in regard to the church of Christ: They are enemies to the head of the society, enemies to his honor and authority, and the work of salvation in the way of the gospel; the upholding

And Mr Williams himself, p. 139, says, "'Tis *moral evidence* of gospel sincerity, which God's word makes the church's rule," &c. Now, does such an appearance, as we have reason at the same time to think is *more frequently* without gospel holiness than with it, amount to moral evidence of gospel sincerity?

and promoting of which is the main design of the society. The church is represented in scripture as the *household of God*, that are in a peculiar manner intrusted with the care of his name and honor in the world, the interests of his kingdom, the care of his jewels and most precious things: And would not common sense teach an earthly prince not to admit into his *household* such, as he had no reason to look upon so much as *probable* friends and loyal subjects in their hearts; but rather friends and slaves in their hearts to his enemies, and competitors for his crown and dignity? The visible church of Christ is often represented as his *city* and his *army*. Now would not common sense teach the inhabitants of a besieged city to open the gates to none, but those concerning whom there is at least an *apparent probability* of their not being enemies? And would any imagine, that in a militant state of things, it is a likely way to promote the interest of the war, to fill up the army with such as are more likely to be on the enemy's side in their hearts, than on the side of their lawful and rightful prince, and his faithful soldiers and subjects?

## SECTION VII.

### *Concerning the Lord's Supper's being a* converting *ordinance.*

THOUGH Mr. Williams holds, that none are to be admitted to the Lord's supper, but such as make a credible pretence or profession of *real godliness*, and are to be admitted under that *notion*, and with respect to such a character appearing on them; yet he holds at the same time, that the Lord's supper is a *converting ordinance*, an ordinance designed for the bringing of some men that have not such a character, to be of such a character. P. 14, 15, 35, 83, 100, 101, 126, 127. It is evident that the meaning of those divines who speak of the Lord's supper as a converting ordinance, is not merely that

God in his sovereign Providence will use it as an *occasion* of the conversion of some; but that it is a converting *means by his institution given to men*, appointing them to use it for this purpose. Thus Mr. Stoddard expressly declares, "That the Lord's supper is INSTITUTED to be a means of regeneration, (*Doc. of inst. Churches*, p. 22.) INSTITUTED for the conversion of sinners, as well as the confirmation of saints; *Appeal*, p. 70, 71. That the direct end of it is conversion, when, the subject that it is administered unto stands in need of conversion." *Ibid*, p. 73, 74. And thus Mr. Williams, after Mr. Stoddard, speaks of the Lord's supper "as by Christ's APPOINTMENT a proper means of the conversion" of some that are unconverted; p. 100, 101. So he speaks of it as *instituted* for the conversion of sinners, through p. 126 and 127.

Now if so, what need of men's being to rational charity converted already, in order to their coming to the Lord's supper? Is it reasonable to suppose God would *institute* this ordinance *directly for that end*, that sinners might be *converted* by it; and then charge his ministers and churches not to admit any that they had not reasonable ground to think were converted *already*?....Mr. Williams, in p. 83, supposes two ends of Christ's appointing the communion of the Christian church; "that such as have grace already should be under proper advantages to gain more, and that those who have *none, should* be under proper advantages to attain grace." But this ill consists with other parts of his scheme. If a king should erect a *hospital* for the help of the poor, and therein has two ends; *one*, the nourishing of such as are in health, and the *other*, the healing of the sick; and furnishes the hospital accordingly, with proper food for the healthy, and proper remedies for the sick: But at the same time charges the officers, *to* whom he commits the care of the hospital, by no means to admit any, unless it be under a *notion* of their being in health, and *from respect to such a qualification in them*, and unless they have *reasonable ground, and moral evidence*, to induce them to believe that they are well: And if this pretence should be made to justify such a conduct, that the hospital was indeed designed for the healing of the sick, yet it was designed to confer this

benefit only on such diseased people as were *hypocrites*, and made a *profession and pretence* of being in health; will any man presume to say, that such a conduct is agreeable to the dictates of the understanding of rational beings? And to suppose, that such should be the conduct of the infinitely wise God, is as unscriptural, as it is unreasonable. We often read in God's word, of men's being convinced of their wickedness and confessing their sins, as a way to be healed and cleansed from sin: But where do we read of men's pretending to more goodness than they have, and making an hypocritical profession and show of goodness, in order to their becoming good men?* Where have we a divine institution, that any who are *wolves* should put on *sheep's clothing*, and so come to his people, that they may believe them to be *sheep*, and under *this notion* receive them into the flock, to the end that they may truly become *of his sheep*?

But to examine this matter, of the Lord's supper being a converting ordinance to ungodly men professing godliness, a little more exactly. If Christ has appointed the Lord's supper to be a converting ordinance to some such as these, then he has appointed it either only for such of them as are *mistaken*, and think themselves *godly* when they are not; or he has appointed it not only for such, but also for such as are *sensible they are ungodly*.

If the former, if it be appointed as a converting ordinance only for such as are *mistaken*, and think themselves godly, or

* Mr. Williams (P. 42.) owns, that persons must make a "profession wherein they make a shew of being wise virgins," in order to come into the visible Church. And (p. 35) he owns, that "all visible saints who are not truly pious, are Hypocrites." Again, it may be observed, he abundantly insists, that men who have no more than common grace and moral sincerity, may lawfully come to sacraments; and yet by what he says (p. 35.) they must profess more. So that men who have no more must profess more; and this it seems, according to divine institution! Again he says (p. 35.) That one end God designed by appointing men to be brought into the Church, is, that through divine grace, they might effectually be brought to Christ, "to give him the whole possession of their hearts; and yet in the very next paragraph (p. 35. &. 36.) he speaks of it as unlawful for men to come to sacraments till they "give up all their hearts to Christ.

converted; then here is an institution of Christ, which never can, in any one instance, be made use of to the end for which he has appointed men to use it. It cannot be made use of for this end by *those who admit* members, and administer the ordinance: For they, as Mr. Williams says, must admit none but such as they are bound by the rule of Christ to look upon as godly men already, and to administer the sacrament to them *under that notion, and with respect to such a character.* Neither can it be made use of to such a purpose by any of the *communicants:* For by the supposition, they must be all such as think they are converted already, and also come *under that notion.* So that by this scheme of things, here is an institution appointed to be upheld and used in the church, which the institution itself makes void and impossible. For, as was observed before, the notion of a converting ordinance *has not* a reference to any secret decree of God, how he *in his* sovereign pleasure *will sometimes use it:* But to his institution given to men, appointing the end for which *they should use it.* Therefore, on the present supposition, the institution appoins the Lord's supper to be used in some cases for the conversion of sinners, but at the same time forbids its being either given or received under any other notion than that of the communicant's being converted already: Which is in effect to forbid its being either given or received *for the* conversion of the communicant, in any one instance. So that the institution effectually destroys and disannuls itself. But God forbid, that we should ascribe any such inconsistent institutions to the divine head of the church!

Or if the other part of the disjunction be taken, and it be said, the Lord's supper is appointed for the conversion of some *that are sensible that they are ungodly* or *unconverted*, the consequence is no less absurd, on Mr. Wiliams's principles. For then the scheme is this. The institution requires some men to make a pretence of *real piety*, and to make a public, solemn profession of *gospel holiness*, which at the same time they are *sensible* they have none of; and this, to the end that others may look upon them to be *real saints* and receive them to the Lord's supper *under that notion:* Not putting on a di-

guise, and making a shew of what they have not, through mistake, but doing it consciously and wilfully, to the honor and glory of God: And all this strictly required of them, as the *instituted means* of their becoming real saints, and the children of God!

Mr. Williams says, p. 14. "Since it is God's will, that his church should admit all such visible saints (viz. such as he had been speaking of) it follows that the Lord's supper is a converting ordinance to such of them as are *unconverted.*" But Mr. Williams is mistaken as to his consequence. The Lord's supper is not instituted to be a converting ordinance to all unconverted men, whom it is God's will the church should admit. For it may be the church's duty, and so God's will, to admit those that live *secretly* in the grossest wickedness, as adultery, buggery, deism, &c. Such men as these may make a fair profession, and the church may be ignorant of their secret wickedness, and therefore may have no warrant to reject them: But yet it will not follow, that God by his institution has given *such* a lawful right to the Lord's supper, having appointed it to be a *converting* ordinance to them.

## SECTION VIII.

### *The Notion of* moral Sincerity's *being the Qualification which gives a lawful Right to Christian Sacraments, examined.*

THOUGH our author disdains the imputation of any such notion, as that of men's being called visible and professed saints from respect to a visibility and profession of *moral sincerity:* Yet it is manifest, that in his scheme (whether consistently or no, others must judge) *moral sincerity* is the qualification which entitles, and gives a lawful right, to sacraments. For he holds, that it is lawful for unsanctified men who have

this qualification, to come to sacraments; and that it is not lawful for them to come without it. Therefore I desire this notion may be thoroughly examined.

And for the greater clearness, let it be observed what *sincerity* in general is. Now *sincerity*, in the general notion of it, is *an honest conformity of some profession or outward shew of some inward property or act of mind, to the truth and reality of it.* If there be shew or pretence of what *is not*, and has *no real existence*, then the pretence is altogether vain; it is only a pretence, and nothing else: And therefore is a pretence or shew without any *sincerity*, of any kind, either moral or gracious.

I now proceed to offer the following arguments against the notion of *moral sincerity's* being the qualification, which gives a lawful right to sacraments.

I. There is no such thing as moral sincerity, *in the covenant of grace*, distinct from gracious sincerity. If any sincerity at all be requisite in order to a title to the seals of the covenant of grace, doubtless it is the sincerity which belongs to that covenant. But there is only one sort of sincerity which belongs to that covenant; and that is a gracious sincerity: The covenant of grace has nothing to do with any other sincerity. There is but one sort of faith belonging to that covenant; and this is saving faith in Jesus Christ, called *in scripture unfeigned faith.* As for the faith of devils, it is not the faith of the covenant of grace.

Here the distinction of an *internal*, and *external* covenant, will not help at all; as long as the covenant, of which the sacraments are seals, is a *covenant of salvation*, or a covenant proposing terms of eternal salvation. The sacraments are seals of such a covenant: They are seals of the *New Testament in Christ's blood*, Matth. xxvi. 28. Luke, xxii 28, *a testament which has better promises than the old*, Heb. viii. 6, and which the apostle tells us, "makes us heirs of the eternal inheritance," Heb. ix. 15. Mr. Williams himself speaks of the covenant sealed in baptism, as "the covenant proposing terms of salvation" P. 23. So he speaks of the covenant entered into by a visible people, as the covenant "in which God

offers everlasting happiness." P. 24, 25. But there is no other religion, no other sincerity, belonging to this covenant *of salvation*, but that which *accompanies salvation*, or is *saving religion and sincerity*. As it is written, Psal. li. 6. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts."

There is such a thing, as what may be called a *moral sincerity*, in distinction from saving, in many moral things; as in loving our friends and neighbors, in loving our country, in choosing the Protestant religion before the Popish, in a conscientious care to do many duties, in being willing to take a great deal of pains in religion, in being sorry for the commission of such and such acts of wickedness, &c. But there are some duties, which, unless they are done with a *gracious sincerity*, they cannot be done at all. As Mr. Stoddard observes, *Safety of Ap.* p. 216. "There are some duties which cannot be done but from a gracious respect to God." Thus there is but one sort of sincerity in loving God as God, and setting our hearts on him as our highest happiness, loving him above the world, and loving holiness above all the objects of our lusts. He that does not do these things with a gracious sincerity, never really doth them at all: He that truly does them, is certainly a godly man; as we are abundantly assured by the word of God. So, there is but one sort of *sincere and cordial consent to the covenant of grace*, but one sort of *giving all our hearts to Jesus Christ*; which things Mr. Williams allows to be necessary, to come to sacraments. That which a man's heart is full of reigning enmity to, he cannot with any reality at all, cordially consent to and comply with: But the hearts of *unsanctified* men are full of reigning enmity to the covenant of grace, according to the doctrine of scripture, and according to the doctrine of Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams too, as we have seen before.

However, if there were any such thing, as a being heartily willing to accept Christ, and a giving all our hearts to Christ, without a saving sincerity, this would not be a complying with the terms of a covenant of salvation. For it is self-evident, that it is only something which is *saving*, that is a compliance with the terms of *salvation*. Now Mr. Williams him-

self often allows (as has been observed) that persons must comply with the terms of the covenant of grace, in order to come to sacraments. Yet because he also in effect denies it, I shall say something further in confirmation of it.

(1.) The sacraments are *covenant privileges*. Mr. Williams calls them so. P. 5. Covenant privileges are covenant benefits, or benefits persons have a right to by the covenant. But persons can have no right to any of the *benefits* of a covenant, without compliance with its *terms*. For that is the very notion of the terms of a covenant, viz. terms of an interest in the benefits of that covenant. It is so in all covenants whatsoever; if a man refuses to comply with the conditions of the covenant, he can claim nothing by that covenant.

(2.) If we consider the sacraments as *seals* of the covenant, the same thing is evident, viz. that a man can have no *right* to them without a compliance with the terms. The sacraments are not only seals of the offer on God's part, or ordinances God has appointed as confirmations of the truth of his covenant, as Mr. Williams seems to insist. P. 74, 75. For considered merely as seals and confirmations of the truth of the gospel, they are (as miracles and other evidences of the Christian religion) seals equally given to *Christians*, *Jews*, *Deists*, moral and vicious, and the whole world that knows of them. Whereas, it is manifest, in the nature of the thing, sacraments are seals of the covenant *to be applied to the communicant*, and of which he is the immediate subject, in a peculiar manner, *as a party in covenant*. Otherwise, what need would there be of his being one of God's *covenant people*, in any sense whatsoever?

But now it is not reasonable to suppose, that the seal of the covenant belongs to any man, *as a party in the covenant*, who will not accept of and comply with the covenant. He that rejects the covenant, and will not comply with it, has no interest in it: And he that has no interest in the covenant, has no right to the seals: For the covenant, and its seals go together. It is so in all covenants among mankind; after a man has come into a bargain proposed and offered by another, yielding to the terms of it, he has a right to have the bargain *sealed* and confirmed to him as a *party in the covenant*; but not before.

And if what the communicant does, be a seal on his part also, as the nature of the thing demonstrates, seeing he is active, in the matter, and as Mr. Williams seems willing to allow p. 75, it will follow, with equal evidence, that a man cannot lawfully partake, unless he yields to, and complies with the covenant. To what purpose is a man's sealing an instrument or contract, but to confirm it *as his own act and deed*, and to declare his compliance with his part of the contract. As when a servant seals his indenture, it is a testimony and ratification of his compliance to the proposed contract with his master. And if a covenant of friendship be proposed between two parties, and they both put their seal to it, hereby they both testify and declare their mutual friendship.

It has been already observed, that unsanctified men, while such, cannot, with any sincerity at all, testify a *present* cordial compliance with the covenant of grace: And as they cannot do this, so neither can they with any sincerity promise a *future* compliance with that covenant. Mr. Williams often allows, that in order to Christian communion men must *promise* a compliance with the covenant, in its spiritual and saving duties; that they *will believe and repent in the sense of the covenant*, willingly accept of Christ and his salvation, love him and live to him, and will do it "immediately, henceforward, from this moment." P. 25, 26, 28 and 76. But how absurd is this! When at the same instant, while they are making and uttering these promises, they are entirely *averse* to any such thing; being "then enemies to Christ, willingly rejecting him, opposing his salvation, striving against it, laboring to find out all manner of difficulties and hinderances in the way of it, not desiring it should come yet," &c. which our author, in a place forecited, says is the case with *all unsanctified* men.

And when unsanctified men promise, that they will spend the rest of their lives in universal *obedience* to Christ, there is no sincerity in such promises; because there is not *such a heart* in them. There is no man but a true disciple of Christ, that is willing thoroughly to *deny himself* for him, and follow him in a way of obedience to all his commands, unto the end, through all difficulties which Christ has given his followers

reason to expect, or commanded them to prepare for; as is evident by Christ's frequent declarations. Luke, xiv. 25....33. Matth. x. 37, 38, 39. chap. xiii. 44, 45, 46. and many parallel places. If an unsanctified man thinks he is *willing*, he does not know his own heart: If he professes to be willing, he does not know what he says. The difficulty and cost of it is not in his view; and therefore he has no proper willingness to comply with the cost and difficulty. That which he is willing for, with a moral sincerity, is something else that he conceives of, which is a great deal easier, and less cross to flesh and blood. If a king should propose to a subject his building him such a tower, promising him a certain reward. If the subject should undertake it, *not counting the cost*, thinking with himself that the king meant another sort of tower, much cheaper; and should be willing only to build that *cheap one*, which he imagined in his own mind; *when* he would by no means have consented to build so costly a tower as the king proposed, if he had understood him right: Such a man could not be said properly to be willing to comply with his prince's proposal, with any sincerity at all. For what he consents to with a moral sincerity, is *not the thing* which the king proposed.

The promises of unsanctified men are like the promises of the man we read of, Luke ix. 57, 58, who said "Lord I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." To whom Christ replied, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." When he made his promise, he probably quite mistook the thing, and did not imagine, that to follow Christ wherever he went, would be to follow him in such poverty and hardship. I suppose the rich *young man* we read of, Mark x. 17, &c. might have what is called *moral sincerity*. But he had no sincerity in *the covenant of grace*. When he came to Christ to know *what he should do to have eternal life*, it is probable he ignorantly thought himself willing to yield himself to Christ's direction. Yet when it came to a trial, and Christ told him he must *go and sell all that he had and give to the poor*, it proved that he had no sincerity or willingness at all for any such

thing. So that it is evident, however unsanctified men may be morally sincere in some things, yet they have no sincerity of any sort in *that covenant*, of which the sacraments are seals; and that moral sincerity, distinct from gracious, in *this covenant*, is a mere imagination, there being indeed no such thing.

II. Another argument against this notion of moral sincerity's giving a right to church communion, is this: A quality that is *transient and vanishing*, can be no qualification or fitness for a *standing* privilege. Unsanctified men may be very serious, greatly affected, and much engaged in religion: But the scripture compares their religion to a *lamp* not supplied with *oil*, which will go out, and to a *plant* that has *no root* nor *deepness of earth*, which will soon wither; and compares such unsanctified men to the *dog* that will *return to his vomit*, and to the *sow*, which, though washed ever so clean, yet, her nature not being changed, will *return to her wallowing in the mire*.

Mr. Williams allows, that persons in order to come to sacraments must have "deep convictions, an earnest concern to obtain salvation," &c. Now every one who is in any degree acquainted with religious matters, knows that such convictions are not wont to last a great while, if they have no saving issue. Mr. Stoddard, in his sermon on the danger of speedy degeneracy, p. 11, says, "unconverted men *will grow weary* of religious duties." And our author himself, p. 78, speaking of those professors in the primitive churches, that fell away to heresy and other wickedness, takes notice that the apostle observes, "IT WILL BE SO....that they which are approved, might be made manifest:" And says Mr. Williams upon it, "Evil and unsanctified men, by such sins, will discover their hypocrisy.

Now seeing this is the case with moral sincerity and common religion, how can it be a qualification for a standing privilege? Nothing can be a fitness for a *durable privilege* but a *durable qualification*. For no qualification has any fitness or adaptedness for more than it extends to; as a short scabbard cannot be fit for a long sword. If a man, going a journey in the night, needs a lamp to light him in his way, who will pre-

tend that a flaming wick without oil, which will last but a few rods, is fit for this purpose? Or if a man were building an house for himself and family, should he put into the frame, pieces of timber known to be of such a nature as that they would probably be rotten in a few months; or should he take blocks of ice instead of hewn stone, because during a present cold season they appeared to be hard and firm; and withal should for a covering put only leaves that will soon fade away, instead of tiles or shingles, that are solid and lasting; would not every spectator ridicule his folly!

If it should be said that unsanctified men, when they *lose* their moral sincerity, may be *cast out* again: This is far from helping the case, or shewing that such men were ever *fit* to be admitted. To say, a piece of timber, though not of a durable nature, is *fit* to be put into the frame of a *building*, because when it begins to rot it may be *pulled* out again, is so far from proving that it was ever fit to be put in, that the speedy necessity of pulling it out rather proves the contrary. If we had the power of constituting a human body, or it were left to us to add members to our own bodies, as there might be occason; we should not think such a member was fit to be added to the frame, that had already radically seated in it a cancer or gangrene, by which it could last but a little while itself, and would endanger the other members; though it were true, that when the disease should prevail, there were surgeons who might be procured to cut that member off.

But to consider a little further this point of *moral sincerity's* qualifying persons for the privileges of the church, I would lay down this proposition as a thing of clear evidence: *Those persons have no fitness in themselves to come to the privileges of the church, who, if they were known, would not be fit to be admitted by others.* For to say, they are *fit* to be members, and yet *not* fit to be allowed to be members, is apparently absurd. But they who have no better fitness than moral sincerity, if that were *known*, would not be fit to be admitted by others; as is allowed by Mr. Williams. For he holds, that in order to be fit to be admitted by others, they must credibly appear to them to have something more than moral sincerity,

even gospel holiness. And it is evident in itself, as well as allowed by Mr. Williams that if such were *known*, they would not be *fit* to be admitted, *only* on their moral sincerity, and the profession and promises they make from such a principle: And that for this reason, because such a principle alone *would not be fit to be trusted.* God himself has taught his church, that the religion of unsanctified men is not fit to be trusted; as a lamp without *oil*, and a plant without *root*, are things not to be trusted. God has directly taught his church to expect, that such a religion will fail; and that such men, having no higher principle, will return to their wickedness. Job xxvii. 8, 9, 10. "The hypocrite....will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" Dan. xii. 10. "The wicked will do wickedly." And therefore God does not require his church to accept their profession and promises. If he has taught us not to credit their profession and promises, then certainly he has taught us not to accept them.

III. Another argument against this supposed rule of allowing and requiring unsanctified men with moral sincerity, to come to sacraments, is this. *That rule*, which if fully attended, would naturally bring it to pass, that the *greater part* of communicants would be *unfit*, even according to that very rule, cannot be a divine rule: But this supposed rule of moral sincerity is such a rule. For if this rule be universally attended, then all unsanctified men, who have present convictions of conscience sufficient to make them morally sincere, must come into the communion of the church. But this conviction and common religion, if it does not issue in conversion (as has been observed) commonly vanishes away in a short time: And yet still these persons, if not convicted of open scandal, are left in the communion of the church, and remain there, *without even moral sincerity.* Experience gives us abundant reason to think, that of those who some time or other have considerable convictions of conscience, so as to make them for the present to be what is called *morally sincere,*

but few are savingly converted.* And if all these must be admitted, (as they must, if this rule be fully attended) then their convictions going away and their sincerity vanishing with it, it will hereby be brought about, that the Lord's table is chiefly surrounded with the worst sort of morally insincere persons, viz. stupid backsliders, that are in themselves far worse than they were before, according to the scripture account, Matth. xii. 45, and 2 Pet. ii. 20. And this as the natural consequence of the forementioned rule, appointing *moral sincerity* to be the qualification for communion. Thus this supposed rule supplants its own design.

IV. Another argument that moral sincerity is not the qualification to which God has annexed a lawful right to sacraments, is, that this qualification is *not at all inconsistent* with a man's living at the same time in the *most heinous wickedness*, in a superlative degree contrary to the Christian religion.

It was before observed to be a thing evident in itself, and allowed by Mr. Williams, That there are some sins, which, while wilfully continued and lived in, though secretly, do wholly disqualify persons for Christian sacraments, and make it *unlawful* for men to partake of them.

Now if it be thus with some sins, doubtless it is *because of* the heinousness of those sins, the high degree of wickedness which is in them. And hence it will follow, that those sins which are in themselves most heinous, and most contrary to the Christian religion, do especially disqualify persons for Christian sacraments, when wilfully lived in.

Let it therefore now be considered, whether it will not follow from these premises, That for men to live in enmity against God and Christ, and in wilful unbelief and rejection of Christ (as the scriptures teach, and as Mr. Stoddard and Mr Williams too assert, is the case with all unsanctified men

* How small a proportion are there of the vast multitudes, that in the time of the late religious commotion through the land had their consciences awakened, who give hopeful abiding evidences of a saving conversion to God!

under the gospel) wholly *disqualifies* men for Christian sacraments. For it is very manifest by scripture and reason, that to live in these things is to live in some of the most heinous kinds of wickedness; as is allowed by Calvinistic divines in general, and by Mr. Stoddard in particular, who says, *Saf. of Ap.* p. 224. "You cannot anger God more by any thing, than by continuing in the neglect of Christ. This is the great controversy God has with sinners; not that they have been guilty of these and those particular transgressions, but that they abide in the rejection of the gospel." Again he says, *Ibid.* p. 249. "The great sin, that God is angry with you for is your unbelief. Despising the gospel is the great provoking sin."

A man's continuing in hatred of his brother, especially a fellow communicant, is generally allowed to be a thing that disqualifies for communion: The apostle compares it to leaven in the passover, 1 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8. But now certainly it is as bad, and as contrary to the nature and design of Christian sacraments, for a man to live in hatred of CHRIST, and to remain a *hateful and accursed enemy* (if I may use Mr. Williams's own language) to the glorious Redeemer and head of the Christian church.

None will deny that *lying* and *perjury* are very gross and heinous sins, and (if known) very scandalous; and therefore it follows from what was observed before, that such sins, if lived in, though secretly, do disqualify persons for Christian sacraments in God's sight. But by our author's own account, all unsanctified men that partake of the Lord's supper, live in *lying and perjury*, and go on to renew these crimes continually; inasmuch as while they continue ungodly men, they live in a constant violation of their promise and oath. For Mr. Williams often lays it down, that all who enter into covenant with God, do promise spiritual duties, such as repentance, faith, love, &c. And that they promise to perform these *henceforward*, even from the *present moment*, unto the *end of life*; see p. 25, 26, 28, 76. And that they do not only promise, but *swear* to do this. P. 18, 100, 101, 129, 130, 140. But for a man to violate the promises he makes in covenanting

with God, Mr. Williams once and again speaks of it as *lying*. P 24, 130. And if so, doubtless their breaking the oath they swear to God, is *perjury*. Now lying to *men* is bad; but lying to GOD is worse. Acts v. 4. And, without doubt, perjury towards God is the *worst* sort of perjury. But if unsanctified men, when they entered into covenant with God, promised and swore, that they would *immediately* and *henceforward* accept of Christ as their Saviour, and love him, and live to him; then while they continue in a wilful rejection of him (which according to Mr. Williams all unregenerate men do) they live continually in the violation of their promise and oath.*

* Here I would observe, that not only in the general do unsanctified men, notwithstanding their moral sincerity, thus live in the most heinous wickedness; but particularly, according to Mr. Williams's own doctrine, their very attendance on the outward ordinances and duties of *worship, is the vilest, most flagrant, and abominable impiety*. In his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, P. 77, 78, he says, "If a man could perform all the outward acts of worship and obedience, which the Bible requires, from the beginning to the end of it, and not do them from *faith in Christ, and love to God*, and not express by them the thoughts, desires, and actings of his soul; they would be so far from being that obedience which Christ requires, that they would be a *mocking of God, and hateful to him*. These outward acts ought to be no other, and in religion are designed to stand for nothing else but to be representations of a man's soul and the acts of that: And when they are not so they are in their own nature a LIE, and false pretence of something within, which is not there: Therefore the Lord abhors them, and reckons these false pretences the *vilest wickedness*. Now when a man performs, all outward obedience and worship, but it does not come from his *heart*, he practically denies the omniscience of Christ, while he puts before him a shew and pretence of something for the reality; and so he belies his own profession. And all this, be it more or less, whatever it pretends to be of religion, instead of being that which Christ requires, is entirely different from it, yea, *infinitely contrary to it*. And those same actions, which when they are in the language of the *heart*, and flow from it, are *pleasing and acceptable* to God and Jesus Christ, are true obedience to him! when they do *not*, are reckoned the MOST FLAGRANT AND ABOMINABLE IMPIETY, and threatened with the SEVEREST DAMNATION OF HELL." Now, who can believe, that God has, by his own holy institution, made that sort of sincerity, which is nothing better than what is consistent with such a *lying, vile, abominable, flagrantly wicked pretence and shew of religion as this*, the very thing that gives a right, even in his sight, to Christian sacraments!

I would observe one thing further under this head, viz. that ungodly men who live under the gospel, notwithstanding any moral sincerity they may have, *are worse, and more provoking enemies of God, than the very heathen*, who never sinned against gospel light and mercy. This is very manifest by the scriptures, particularly Matth. x. 13, 14. Amos iii. 2. Rom. ii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 21. Rev. iii. 15, 16.

I having suggested concerning Mr. Stoddard's doctrine of admitting *more* unconverted than converted, by attending Christ's rule, that this supposes it to be the case of the members of the visible church, that the greater part of them are more provoking enemies to God than most of the heathen; Mr. Williams represents himself as greatly alarmed at this: He calls it an extraordinary passage, and puts five questions about it to my serious consideration. P. 72, 73. The first and chief question is this; "did Mr. Stoddard ever say in the *Appeal*, or any where else, of most of our fellow worshippers at the sacrament, that we have no reason to think concerning them, but that they are more provoking enemies to the Lord, whom Christians love and adore, than most of the very *heathen?*" His three next questions are to represent the heinousness of such supposed ill treatment of Mr. Stoddard....And I think will be sufficiently answered, by what I shall offer in reply to the first.

I will tell him what Mr. Stoddard said. Speaking to such as do not come to Christ, living under the gospel, he said, *Safety of Ap.* p. 234, 235. "You may not think to escape as the *heathen* do: Your load will be heavier and your fire will be hotter, and your judgment sorer, than the judgment of other men. God will proportion every man's misery to his iniquity. And as you have enjoyed greater light and love, so you must expect more amazing and exquisite wrath, than other men: Conscience has more to accuse you of and con-

I might here also observe, that if moral sincerity or common grace gives a right to sacraments in the sight of God, then that which (according to Mr. Stoddard's doctrine before observed) is a *spirit of lust*, that which is *contrary to, and at war with, and would destroy saving grace*, is the thing which gives a right, in the sight of God, to Christian sacraments.

demn you for; and so has God: And you will sink down deeper into hell, than other men. You are treasuring up a greater measure of wrath, than others, against the day of wrath. You will wish you had lived in the *darkest* corners of the earth among Scythians and Barbarians."

And Mr. Williams must allow me to remind him of what another divine has said, and that is himself. In his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11. p. 25, 26. he says, "It is to be feared, there are great numbers here present, that are in an *unconverted, unrenewed, unpardoned state*; strangers from God, and enemies to him. Yet you now look with great pity and compassion on that poor *captive*, for whom we have now been offering up our earnest prayers, * who has been so long in so pitiable and sorrowful a condition, and who is now in the thickness of *popish* darkness and superstition....If you are out of Christ, and destitute of true faith in him, if your natures remain *unrenewed and unsanctified*, what is your state better than hers, which looks so sorrowful and distressing? Rather, is it not *worse*? When you consider, that in the fulness of the means of grace which you have enjoyed all your days, you are as far from any saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, as those who have lived in the dregs and abyss of *popish* ignorance, and know not what to believe, but what the church, that is, *Antichrist*, tells them. If you die thus, your misery will be *aggravated* INCONCEIVABLY beyond theirs: *Which Christ* has plainly enough shewn us, when he upbraided the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, and tells them how much in the comparison they fall below Tyre and Sidon" (heathen cities, notorious for luxury, debauchery, and the grossest idolatry) "and Sodom; for whom it should be *more tolerable*, than for them."

The same author says also, even in the book under consideration, p. 86. "That the unbelief and impieties of *visible saints*, is what they will be punished for *above all men in the world*."

* Mrs. Eunice Williams, brought up in Canada, among the Caghnawage Indians, sister to the then pastor of the church in Mansfield, where this sermon was preached, upon a day of prayer kept on her account; she being then in that place on a visit.

And now, I think it may be proper for Mr. Williams himself to answer his 5th question, which he puts to my serious consideration, viz. "What honor is it to our Lord Jesus Christ, to treat visible saints in such a manner, when at the same time it is his revealed will they should be outwardly treated as visible saints?"

## SECTION IX.

### *A View of what Mr.* Williams *says concerning the* public *Covenanting of Professors.*

I. MR. WILLIAMS often speaks with contempt, of my supposing it to be a duty required of such as come to sacraments, that they should *explicitly own the covenant*, and disputes largely against it. P. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and many other places. He says concerning me, p. 22. "It is very unhappy, that this good gentleman should use the scripture in such a manner, to prove a divine institution which never had an existence; and after all that is said, is but a mere imagination and chimera; it being evident, there never was any such divine institution for the church under the Old Testament, binding particular persons *publicly and explicitly to own the covenant*, in order to their enjoying the outward ordinances of it." However it falls out something happily for me, that I am not quite alone in this chimera, but have Mr. Williams himself to join me in it; who abundantly asserts the same thing p. 5, 8, 9, and many other places, who *uses the scripture in* the same *manner*, and supposes the same *divine institution*; and who in p. 5, of the treatise in hand, having stated the following inquiry, "What is that evidence, which by DIVINE APPOINTMENT the church is to have, of the saintship of those who are admitted to the outward privileges of the covenant of grace?" Makes this answer to it: "The SCRIPTURE has determined the matter thus, that the open profession and

declaration of a PERSON's believing in Christ....And an hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, and engagement on his part to fulfiil it," &c. " is the sole and entire ground of that public judgment, which the church is to make of the real saintship of professors." It is manifest, he cannot intend merely that they should be the *posterity* of such as thus owned the covenant, or *declared their consent to it*, and so are looked upon as those that owned the covenant in their ancestors, at the beginning of the covenant line (though sometimes he seems to suppose, this is all that is necessary, as I shall take particular notice by and by :) For here he expressly speaks of a *personal* owning the covenant, or the *open profession and declaration of a* PERSONS'S consent to the covenant. And thus he often speaks of the same matter, in like *manner*, as a *personal* thing, or what is done by *the person judged of*, and *received*. See p. 10, 31, 32, 33, 34, 73, 84, *139*. And in the 2d page of his preface, he declares himself fully established in Mr. Stoddard's doctrine concerning this affair of qualifications for the Lord's supper ; who expressly declares it to be his judgment, that " it is requisite, that persons be not admitted unto communion in the Lord's supper, without making a PERSONAL and public profession of their faith and repentance." *Appeal.* p. 93, 94.

And as Mr. Williams holds that there must be a *public, personal owning the covenant ;* so he also maintains, that this profession must be *explicit*, or *express*. He says p. 20. " Since we have no direction in the bible, at what time, nor in what manner any *personal, explicit* covenanting should be performed....It appears plain to a demonstration, that the people knew nothing of any such institution ; as I suppose, the Christian church did until Mr. Edwards discovered it." But if I was the first discoverer he should have owned, that since I have have discovered it, he himself and all my opposers have seen cause to follow me and receive my dicovery. For so the case seems to be, if he gives us a true account (in p. 132) where he rejects, with indignation, the imputation of any other opinion. " How often (says he) has Mr. Edwards said none but visible saints are to be admitted ? Do not ALL Mr.

Edwards's OPPOSERS say, that NO MAN is to be admitted, who does not profess his hearty belief of the gospel, and the earnest and sincere purpose of his heart, so far as he knows it, to obey all God's commands, and keep his COVENANT? NONE, who do not make as full and EXPRESS a profession as the Israelites did, or was ever required by Christ or his apostles, in any instances that can be produced in the bible, of bodies of men or particular persons' admission into visible covenant with God?" He had before spoken of *the* WORDS *which the Israelites used in their entering into covenant with God*, p. 5, which must refer to their entering into covenant in the *wilderness*; for we have no account of any *words* at all, used by that nation, *at their entering into covenant*, if not there. And this he sometimes speaks of as the covenant they made, when God *took them into covenant*, p. 8, 36, 37. And p. 20, he allows *that* to be an instance of *explicit* covenanting: But ridicules my pretending to shew, that *explicit* covenanting was a divine institution for all; when, he says, we have an account of but four instances of any *explicit* covenanting with God by the Jews, and those on most extraordinary occasions, and by *the body* of the people. But what matter is it, whether there were four, or but two, or only that one instance in the wilderness? When he himself with such earnestness declares, that all my opposers hold, *every man* must make as full and express a profession of the covenant as ever the Israelites did, or was ever required, in any instance that can be produced in the bible, whether of *bodies of men* or *particular persons'* admission, &c. If this be so, and what he said before be also true, then all Israel, even every individual person among them, that ever was admitted to the privileges of the church, thoughout all their generations, by his own confession and assertion, did personally make as *explicit* a profession of the covenant, as the body of the people did in that instance in the wilderness. And not only so, but the same must every individual person do, that ever comes to sacraments, through all ages, to the end of the world. Thus Mr. Williams fights hard to beat down himself. But I will not say in his own language, that in so doing *he fights hard to beat down a poor man of straw.*

If any should say, that Mr. Williams, when speaking of an *express profession*, does not mean a profession in *words*, but only in *actions*; such as an outward attendance on ordinances and duties of worship: I answer, if such actions are a profession, yet certainly they are not an *express* profession; they are no more than an *implicit* profession. And besides, it is very plain, the profession he speaks of is a verbal profession, or a profession in *words*. Thus p. 36, when describing the profession which ought to be made, he says, "It is in as strong WORDS as were used by any whom the apostles admitted." And elsewhere (as was before noted) he *often* insists, that a profession should be made in words without any discrimination as to their meaning. Which shews, it is a profession in *words* that he designs. And although p. 104, he speaks of a performance of the outward duties of morality and worship, *as the only way that God ever appointed of making real saintship visible*: Yet this is only another instance of his great *inconsistence* with himself; as appears by what has already been observed, and appears further by this, that when he speaks of a profession of consent to the terms of the covenant, &c. he often speaks of it as a profession which ought to be made *in order* to admission to these ordinances. (P. 5, 10, 35, 36, 132, and other places.) If so, then how can the *attendance* itself, on these ordinances of worship, be all the profession which is to be made? Must men first come to ordinances, in order to admission to ordinances! And moreover, Mr. Williams himself distinguishes between *engaging* and swearing to *keep covenant* in the public profession, and attending on the ordinances and duties of worship, which he speaks of as belonging to the *fulfilment of the engagement and oath*. P. 130. And lastly I would observe, though it could be consistently made out (which it can never be) that Mr. Williams does not mean a professing in *words*, it would be nothing to the purpose. If it be in words, or in other signs which are equivalent to words and which are a *full and express profession* (as Mr. Williams says) it is exactly the same thing as to my purpose, and the consequence of the argument, which was, that real godliness must be professed. And indeed this very thing

which I endeavored to prove by all that I said on this head, is expressly, again and again, allowed by Mr. Williams. Yet he makes a great ado, as if there was a vast difference between him and me in this affair of public covenanting with God; and as though my notions of it were very singular, absurd, and mischievous.

II. Mr. Williams says a great deal in opposition to me, to shew that *swearing by God's name, swearing to the Lord*, and the like, does not mean *covenanting with God*: But yet in p. 18, in the midst of his earnest dispute against it, he owns it. I mentioned several scripture prophecies, referring to the *Gentile* converts in the days of the gospel, which foretell that they should *swear by God's name, swear to the Lord of Hosts*, &c. as a prediction of the Gentiles *public covenanting with God*; using that as one thing which confirmed, that this was commonly the meaning of such phrases in the Old Testament. But Mr. Williams despises my interpretation of these prophecies, and my argument from them. Nevertheless, in his reply, he owns the very thing: He in effect owns, that entering into covenant, and owning the covenant is what is meant by these prophecies; mentioning this, plainly with approbation, as the universal sense of protestant commentators. His words are, p. 18. "As to all these prophecies, which Mr. Edwards has quoted, referring to the Gentiles, and their swearing by the name of the Lord, the sense of protestant commentators upon them, I think, universally is, that when the gentiles, in God's appointed time, should be *brought into covenant with God*, it should be as the Jews were, by being persuaded *to consent to the terms of the covenant of grace*, and *engaging themselves to God*, to be faithful to him, and *keep covenant with him*. He who heartily consents to the terms of the covenant of grace, gives up himself to the Lord, *gives the hand to the Lord*, engages to own and serve him; which is the thing signified in all those metaphorical phrases, which describe or point out this event, in the Old Testament language."

III. Mr. Williams in these last cited words, explains the phrase of *giving the hand to the Lord*, as signifying *engaging themselves to God in covenant*, and *consenting to the terms of the*

*covenant* (as the reader sees) and yet in the next page but two, he contemns and utterly disallows my interpreting the same phrase in the same manner. Mr. Williams says, p. 21. "As to the words of Hezekiah, when he called the Israelites to the passover, bidding them *yield* or *give the hand to the Lord*; and in Ezra, *they gave the hand* to put away their wives; which he thinks to be an Hebrew phrase for entering into covenant, it carries its own confutation with it."

IV. Mr. Williams often speaks of the professions made by the ancient Israelites and Jewish Christians, *when they entered into covenant*, and *were admitted into the Church*. Whereas, according to the doctrine of the same author, in the same book, we have no account of any profession made by either, on any such occasion. For he insists, that the *children* of such as are in covenant, are *born in covenant*; and are not *admitted into covenant* any otherwise than as they were *seminally* in their ancestors; and that the profession of their ancestors, at the head of the covenant line, is that *individual profession, which brings them into covenant*. His words are p. 135, 136, "It is one and the same individual profession and engagement, which brings them and their children into covenant. And if there is one instance in the bible, where God ever took any man into covenant, and not his children at the same time, I should be glad to see it. It is by virtue of their being in covenant, *that they* have a right to the seals. And if *these* children are not cast out of covenant by God, *their* children have as good a right to the seals as they had. It is God's will, that his mark and seal should be set upon them, AND THEIR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN FOREVER, until God casts them out of covenant. It is certain, they have an interest in the covenant, and they have a right to the privileges of the covenant, *so long* as they remain in covenant; and that is until God cuts them off, and casts them out."

And accordingly he supposes John the Baptist never inquired into the doctrinal knowledge of those he baptized, because they *were already in covenant with God*, and members of his visible church, and not yet turned out: And he suggests, that John knew many of them not to be of a good moral char-

acter. P. 98. So he largely insists, that the *three thousand Jews* and proselytes that the apostles baptized, Acts ii. were not taken into covenant, but only *continued in covenant*. P. 46, 47. So he supposes the Eunuch, before Philip baptized him, was a member of the church, and in covenant with God. P. 50. Though he inconsistently mentions those same persons in the 2d of Acts, and the Eunuch, as *admitted into the church* by the apostles, and primitive ministers, p. 9, 10, 59. And so p. 8, 26, he mentions God's *taking all Israel* into covenant: He mentions the *profession* which the Iraelites made, p. 25, and p. 5, he speaks of the *words which the Israelites used, in their entering into covenant with God.* And p. 36, 37, he speaks of their profession in Moses's time, *which God trusted so far as to admit them into covenant.* Whereas indeed, according to Mr. Williams, they *were not taken in*, nor did they *enter into covenant*, neither in the plains of Moab, nor at mount Sinai. He says expressly, that they were in covenant before that time, when in Egypt, being taken in their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, p. 91. But then we read of *no words*, that those patriarchs *used at their entering into covenant.* And it will undoubtedly follow, on Mr. Williams's principles, that we must go further back still for Israel's being taken into covenant; we must go up even to Adam himself, the first father of mankind, who was visibly in covenant, and so his posterity, in the line of Noah's ancestors, without the line's being broken by a visible *cutting off*, and casting *out* by God, as we have all reason to suppose. And after the flood, we have reason to think, God had a covenant race continued in Shem's posterity, especially in the line of Abraham's ancestors. And though Terah, Abraham's Father, was tainted with the then prevailing idolatry; yet there is no appearance of the line's being then *cut off*, in the way Mr. Williams speaks of, by God's visibly *casting him out.* On the contrary, God took a special, fatherly care of him and his children, in bringing them from Ur of the Chaldees, the land of graven images, to Haran. Gen. xi. 31. And God is called the God of the father of Abraham and Nahor, that is, the God of Terah. Gen. xxxi. 53. And if it be said, that in Abraham began a new dispensation of the

covenant; so that Abraham might properly on that account be said to be *taken into covenant*, as though his ancestors had not been taken into covenant: I answer, the alteration of the dispensation was in no measure so great as that after Christ's resurrection and ascension; and yet Mr. Williams will not allow, that the Jewish converts, received in Acts ii. on this new dispensation, were any more than *continued in covenant*, and in the church. So that, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, it must be Adam's profession of religion that was *the individual profession* which made all his posterity, in the line of the church, even to the Apostle's days, *visible saints*, or (as he himself explains visible saintship) such as we have rational ground to think are real saints, possessed of gospel holiness, and on that account have a right to sacraments. For so He says it is with the children of them that are *in covenant*, and their children, and their children *for ever*, until cut off and cast out by God.

So that now we have the scheme in a true view of it. The Pharisees and Sadducees that John baptized, whom Mr. Williams supposes John knew to be not of a good moral character, and whose doctrinal knowledge he did not inquire into before he baptized them; because they had before been admitted in their ancestors; even *these* were visible saints, and such as John had rational ground to think had sufficient *doctrinal* knowledge and were orthodox and real saints, having moral evidence that they had gospel holiness, because Adam, their original ancestor, made a profession of religion, in words of double meaning, without any marks of distinction or discrimination, by which any might know their meaning!

And if we should go back no further than Abraham, it would not much mend the matter; supposing the case had been so, that we had the words of both Abraham's and Adam's profession written down in our Bibles: Whereas we have neither; no, nor have we the words of the profession of any one person, either in the old Testament or New, at their being *taken into* the church, if the things which Mr. Williams says are true; though he speaks so often of professions, and

words of professions, and declarations, made on such occasions, as if we had an express account of them in scripture.

V. As our author abundantly maintains, that unsanctified men in covenanting with God, may and do promise the exercise of saving Faith, repentance, love, &c. So he holds, that they promise to begin the exercise of these graces *immediately, from this moment*, and to live in them from *henceforth*, p. 25, 26, 28, 76.

Now I desire this matter may be looked into, and thoroughly examined. Not only the holy scriptures, and agreeable to them, Mr. Stoddard, and sound divines in general teach us, but Mr. Williams himself, maintains, that men who are unsanctified, do for *the present refuse and oppose* these things. In a forecited place of his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11, our author says, that "Unregenerate and unsanctified men oppose all means for the bringing them to these things, are willingly without them, and labor to find out all manner of difficulties and hindrances in the way of them; and if they pray for them, do not desire they should come yet, but would stay a while longer." Now, how is this consistent with such persons' promising with any sincerity at all, that they will comply with and perform these things *immediately from henceforth* without staying *one moment* longer? If God calls a man *this moment* to yield his whole heart to him in faith, love and new obedience; and if he, in answer to the call, solemnly promises and swears* to God, that he will immediately comply with the call, without the least delay, and does it with any *sincerity* inconsistent with the most vile perfidy and perjury; then how does he now willingly refuse, oppose, and struggle against it, as choosing to *stay a while longer?*

Besides, such promises and oaths of unregenerate men must not only be contrary to sincerity, but very *presumptuous*, upon these two accounts. (1.) Because herein they take an

* It must be observed, that Mr. Williams often speaks of the promise which an unregenerate man makes in covenanting with God as his oath. p. 18, 100, 101, 129, 130, 143.

oath to the Most High, which, it is ten thousand to one, they will break as soon as the words are out of their mouths, by continuing still unconverted; yea, an oath which they are breaking even while they are uttering it. And what folly and wickedness is it for men to take such oaths? And how contrary to the counsel given by the wise man, in Eccl. v. 2, 4, 5, 6? And to what purpose should ungodly men be encouraged to utter such promises and oaths before the church, for the church's acceptance; which are so far from being worthy to be credited, or a fulfilment of them to be expected, that it is many thousands, and perhaps millions of times more likely to be otherwise? That is, it is so much more likely they will not be converted the very next *moment*. (2.) When an unconverted man makes such a promise, he promises what he has not to give, or that which he has not sufficiency for the performance of; no sufficiency in himself, nor any sufficiency in any other that he has a claim to, or interest in. There is indeed a sufficiency in God to enable him; but he has no claim to it. For God's helping a man savingly to believe in Christ is a *saving blessing*: And Mr. Williams himself owns, that a man cannot by promise claim any saving blessings, till he has fulfilled the conditions of the covenant of grace, p. 22, 28. So that in vain it is said by Mr. Williams, p. 27, "I pray that it may be thoroughly considered what is propounded in the covenant of grace, and on what stock a man is to finish." Meaning (as appears by the sequel) the *stock* of God's sufficiency. To what purpose is this said? When the covenant of grace promises or makes over no such *stock* to him who has no interest in the promises of it, as having not yet complied with the condition of its promises. Nor does an unconverted man promise any thing in a humble dependance on that *stock*; no such men do *lay hold on God's strength*, or trust in God's sufficiency: For this is a discriminating mark of a true saint; as our author himself observes, in that forecited passage, in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 19.

I would here take notice of it as remarkable, that though Mr. Williams had owned that a natural man can claim no sav-

ing blessings by God's promise, yet to help out his scheme of a natural man's engaging and promising, even with an oath, the exercises of saving grace, he, (in p. 27, 28, especially, 28) speaking of the *great encouragement* on which unsanctified men can promise these things, supposes God has given *such encouragement* to them who promise and engage themselves to God with that degree of earnestness and sincerity which he often speaks of as requisite to communion, that we have reason to determine that God never will fail of bestowing on them saving grace; so that they shall fulfil their promises. I say, he supposes that we have reason to determine this, because he himself determines it. His words are these: "Though there be no promise of saving good, exclusive of faith, yet there being a command and encouragement, there are suitable springs of his endeavor and hope, in his engaging himself to God and casting himself upon his mercy with all the earnestness and sincerity he can. God NEVER will be worse than his encouragement, nor do less than he has encouraged; and he has said, *To him that hath, shall be given.*"

Now, if this be so, and if this will make it out, that an unconverted man who is morally sincere may reasonably, on this *encouragement*, promise immediately to believe and repent, though this be not in his own power; then it will follow that whenever an unconverted man covenants, with such moral sincerity as gives a lawful right to sacraments, *God NEVER will fail* of giving him converting grace *that moment*, to enable him *from thenceforward* to believe and repent as he promises. And if this be so, and none may lawfully covenant with God *without* moral sincerity (as Mr. Williams also says) then it will follow, that *never* any one person comes, nor can come lawfully to the Lord's supper in an unconverted state; because when they enter into covenant lawfully (supposing them not converted before) God always converts them in the moment of their covenanting, *before* they come to the Lord's table. And if so, what is become of all this grand dispute about the lawfulness of persons' coming to the Lord's table, who have not converting grace?

has such a heart in him; because his lips pretend to declare his heart, and the nature of a promise implies real intention, will and compliance of heart. And what can be more evident than these propositions? Surely they that reject the covenant of grace in their hearts (as Mr. Williams owns, all unsanctified men do) cannot own it with their lips, without either deceiving or being deceived. Words cannot be a true signification of more than is in the mind. *Inward covenanting*, as Mr. Stoddard taught, is by an act of saving faith. (*Safety of Ap.* p. 85, 86.) And *outward covenanting* is an expression of *inward covenanting*: Therefore, if it be not attended with *inward covenanting*, it is a false expression. And Mr. Williams, in effect, owns the same thing: For he says, p. 21, "That there is no doubt they who are wilful, obstinate sinners, deal *deceitfully and falsely* when they pretend to covenant with God." But so do all unregenerate sinners under the gospel, according to Mr. Stoddard's and his own doctrine. And thus the very point, about which he contests so earnestly and so long, and with so many great words, is in the midst of it all, given up fully by his own concession.

VII. Mr. Williams is greatly displeased with my saying (as above) that none who are under the power of a carnal mind can visibly own the covenant, *without lying, or being deceived*, &c. And he finds great fault with my gloss on Psal. lxxviii. 36, 37. "They did flatter him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongue:" Which I interpret as though they lied in pretending that respect to God, which indeed they had not, p. 35 of my *Inquiry*. But he insists, that what is meant is only their "Lying in breaking their promise," p. 24. And he insists upon it (as has been observed already) that natural men may covenant with God and *speak true*. But it seems he has wonderfully changed his mind of late: For a little while ago he declared elsewhere *for* the very same things which he here inveighs *against*, and spoke of natural men's profession and pretence of respect to God, as being actually A LIE IN ITS OWN NATURE; and not only becoming so by their breaking covenant afterwards. Particularly, it is

remarkable, he has thus interpreted this very text now in dispute. In his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, speaking of the outward acts of *worship* done by those that do not love God nor believe in Christ, he expressly says, p. 77. "They are *in their own nature a* LIE; a false pretence of something *within*, that is not there. See (says Mr. Williams) this interpretation of it, in Psal. lxxviii. 34....37. *They did flatter him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues,*" &c. (Ibid. p. 74. "Christ's visible church are such as visibly and outwardly profess to be his subjects, and act outwardly as if they believed on him. But these outward acts in themselves are not that religion and obedience, which Christ requires; nay of themselves, they have no religion in them; and Christ has nothing to do with them, *but as* they are the fruits and expressions of the heart, as they are the language and index of the mind and conscience, and outward declarations of the inward frame, temper and actings of the soul. If they are *not so*, they are so far from having any religion in them that they are *hateful* to him, being only the visible resemblance, the pretence and *feigning* of religion; i. e. they are *mockery*, *hypocrisy*, FALSEHOOD and LIES; and belong not to the kingdom of Christ, but of the *Devil*." Let the reader now compare this with my gloss on the text.

## CONCLUSION OF THIS SECOND PART.

Thus I have considered the various parts and principles of Mr. Williams's scheme, which are the foundations on which he builds all his superstructure, and the ground on which he proceeds in all his reasonings, through his book; and many particulars in his answers and arguments have been already considered. Mr. Williams says thus, p. 135, "I own, that at present I have no more expectation to see the scheme which

Mr. Edwards aims to establish, defended upon Calvinistic principles, than the doctrine of *transubstantiation.*" On which I shall only say, it might perhaps be thought very impertinent in me, to tell my readers what I do, or what I do not expect, concerning *his* scheme. Every reader, that has reason enough of his own not to take the big words and confident speeches of others for demonstration, is now left to judge for himself, whose scheme is most akin to the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, for inconsistence and self contradiction.

Nevertheless, I will proceed to consider our author's reasonings a little more particularly, in the ensuing part.

# PART III.

## *Containing some remarks on Mr.* Williams's *exceptionable* Way of Reasoning, *in support of his own Scheme, and in Opposition to the contrary principles.*

### SECTION I.

### General *Observations upon his Way of arguing, and answering Arguments; with some* Instances *of the* first *Method excepted against.*

MR. WILLIAMS endeavors to support his own opinion, and to confute the book he pretends to answer, by the following methods.

1. By frequently *misrepresenting what I say*, and then disputing or exclaiming against what he wrongfully charges as mine.

2. By misrepresenting what others say in their writings, whose opinions he pretends to *espouse*.

3. By *seeming to oppose* and *confute* arguments, and yet only saying things which have no *reference* at all to them, but relate entirely to *other* matters, that are altogether *foreign* to the argument in hand.

4. By advancing *new* and *extraordinary notions*; which are both manifestly contrary to *truth*, and also contrary to the *common apprehensions* of the Christian church in all ages.

5. By making use of peremptory and confident *assertions*, instead of arguments.

6. By using great *exclamation*, in the room of arguing; as though he would amuse and alarm his readers, and excite terror in them, instead of rational conviction.

7. By wholly *overlooking* arguments, and *not answering* at all; pretending, that there is *no* argument, *nothing* to answer when the case is manifestly far otherwise.

8. By frequently turning off an argument with this reflection, that it is *begging the question*; when there is not the least shew or pretext for it.

9. By very frequently *begging the question* himself, or doing that which is *equivalent*.

10. By often alleging and insisting on things in which he is *inconsistent* with himself.

As to the *first* of these methods used by Mr. Williams, i. e. his *misrepresenting what I say*, and then disputing or exclaiming against what he injuriously charges as mine, many instances have been already observed: I now would take notice of some other instances.

In p. 15, he charges me with "affirming vehemently, in a number of repetitions, *that the doctrine taught is, that no manner of pretence to any* VISIBLE *holiness is made or designed to be made.*" These he cites as my words, marking them with notes of quotation. Whereas I never said any such words, nor said or thought any such *thing*, but the contrary. I knew, that those whose doctrine I opposed, declared that *visible* holiness was necessary: And take particular notice of it (p. 8.) when

I say, "It is granted on all hands, that none ought to be admitted, as members of the visible church of Christ, but visible saints;" and argue on this supposition for fifteen pages together, in that same part of my book where Mr. Williams charges me with asserting the contrary. What I say is, that people are taught that *they come into the church without any pretence to sanctifying grace* (p. 15.) I do not say without a pretence to *visible holiness*. Thus Mr. Williams alters my words, to make them speak something, not only diverse, but contrary to what I do say, and say very often; and so takes occasion, or rather *makes* an occasion, to charge me before the world, with telling a *manifest untruth*, p. 15.

Again, Mr. Williams in answering my argument concerning brotherly *love*, (p. 70, 71) represents me as arguing, "That in the exercise of Christian *love* described in the gospel, there is such an union of hearts, as there cannot be of a saint to an unsanctified man." Which is a thing I never said, and is quite contrary to the sentiments which I have abundantly declared. I indeed speak of that *brotherly love*, as what cannot be of a saint to one that is not *apprehended* and *judged* to be sanctified. But that notion of a peculiar love, which cannot be to an unsanctified man, or without the reality of holiness in the person beloved, is what I ever abhorred, and have borne a most loud and open and large testimony against, again and again, from the press, and did so in the preface to that very book which Mr. Williams writes against.

In p. 74, Mr. Williams represents me as supposing, that in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, *both the* covenanting *parties*, viz. Christ and the communicant, *seal to the truth* of the communicant's faith; or that both seal to this as true, that the communicant *does receive Christ*. Whereas, by me, no such thing was ever thought; nor is any thing said that has such an aspect. What I say, is very plain and express, (p. 75.) *That Christ by his minister professes his part of the covenant, presents himself, and professes the willingness of his heart to be theirs who receive him.* That on the other hand, *the communicant*, in receiving the offered symbols, *professes his part in the covenant, and the willingness of his heart to re-*

*ceive Christ who is offered.* How different is this from both parties sealing to the truth of the communicant's faith ?

In p. 76, 77 and 80. He greatly misrepresents my argument from 1 Cor. xi. 28. "Let a man examine himself," &c. as though I supposed *the Greek word translated* examine, *must necessarily imply an examination to approbation ;* that it *signifies to approve ;* and *that a man's examination must mean his approving himself to himself to be sanctified.* This representation he makes over and over, and builds his answer to the argument, upon it ; and in opposition to this, he says, (p. 77) "Wherever the word means to examine to approbation, it is not used in its natural sense, but metonymically." Whereas, there is not the least foundation for such a representation : No such thing is said or suggested by me, as if I supposed that the meaning of the word is to *approve*, or to *examine to approbation.* What I say is, that it properly signifies *proving* or *trying a thing, whether it be true and of the right sort*, (p. 77.) And I there, in the same place, expressly speak of the word (in the manner Mr. Williams does) as not used in its natural sense, but metonymically, when it is used to signify *approve*. So that Mr. Williams's representation is not only diverse from, but contrary to what I say. Indeed I suppose (as well I may) that when the apostle directs persons to try themselves with respect to their qualifications for the Lord's supper, he would not have them come, if upon trial they find themselves not qualified. But it would be ridiculous to say, that I therefore suppose the meaning of the word, *try* or *examine*, is to approve, when it is evident that the *trying* is only in order to knowing whether a thing is to be *approved*, or *disapproved.*

In p. 98, on the argument from John's baptism, Mr. Williams alters my words, bringing them the better to comport with the odious representation he had made of my opinion, viz. that I required a giving an account of *experiences*, as a term of communion ; he puts in words as mine, which are not mine, and distinguishes them with marks of quotation ; charging me with *representing it as* "probable that John had as much time to inquire into their experiences as into their

doctrinal knowledge." Whereas, my words are these, p. 101. "He had as much opportunity to inquire into the credibility of their profession, as he had to inquire into their doctrinal knowledge and moral character."

In p. 118, and to the like purpose, p. 134, our author represents me, and others of my principles, as holding, that *the gospel does peremptorily sentence men to damnation for eating and drinking without sanctifying grace.* But surely Mr. Williams would have done well to have referred to the place in my Inquiry, where any thing is said that has such a look. For, I find nothing that I have said in that book, or any other writing of mine, about the gospel's peremptorily sentencing such men to damnation, or signifying how far I thought they were exposed to damnation, or expressing my sentiments more or less about the matter.

In p. 130 and 131, Mr. Williams says, "when one sees with what epithets of honor Mr. Edwards in some parts of his book has complimented Mr. Stoddard, it must look like a strange medley to tack to them....*That he was a weak beggar of his question; a supposer of what was to be proved; taking for granted the point in controversy; inconsistent with himself; ridiculously contradicting his own arguments.*" These expressions, which Mr. Williams speaks of as tacked to those honorable epithets, he represents as expressions which I had used concerning Mr. Stoddard: And his readers that have not consulted my book, would doubtless take it so from his manner of representation. Whereas, the truth is, no one of these expressions is used concerning Mr. Stoddard any where in my book; nor is there one disrespectful word spoken of him there. All the ground Mr. Williams had to make such a representation, was, that in answering *arguments* against my opinion I endeavored to shew them to be *weak* (though I do not find that I used that epithet) and certainly for one to pretend to answer arguments, and yet allow them to be strong, would be to shew *himself* to be very weak. In answering some of these arguments, and endeavoring to shew wherein the inconclusiveness of them lay, I have sometimes taken notice that the defect lay in what is called *begging the*

*question*, or supposing the thing to be proved. And if I had said so concerning Mr. Stoddard's arguments, speaking of them *as his*, I do not know why it should be represented as any *personal* reflection, or unhandsome, dishonorable treatment of *him*. Every inconclusive argument is weak; and the business of a disputant is to shew wherein the weakness lies: But to speak of *arguments* as weak, is not to call *men* weak. All the ground Mr. Williams has to speak of me as saying, that Mr. Stoddard *ridiculously contradicted his own arguments*, is, that in p. 11, citing some passages out of Mr. Stoddard's *Appeal*, I use these words; "But how he reconciled these passages with the rest of his treatise, I would modestly say, I must confess myself at a loss." And particularly I observed, that I could not see how they consist with what he says, p. 16, and so proceed to mention one thing which appears to me not well to consist with them. But certainly this is *not indecently* to reflect on Mr. Stoddard any more than Mr. Williams indecently reflects on the FIRST REFORMERS, in his answer to Mr. Croswell, p. 74, 75, where speaking of their doctrine of a particular persuasion as of the essence of saving faith, he says, "they are found inconsistent with themselves, and their doctrine lighter than vanity." And again p. 82, "if ever (says Mr. Williams) any men were confuted from their own concessions, these divines are." And more to the like *purpose*. Which gives me a fair occasion to express the like *wonder* at him, as he does at me p. 131, but I forbear *personal* reflections.

Mr. Williams in the same page, has these words; "And to say, that all unsanctified men do profess and seal their consent to the covenant of grace in the Lord's supper, when *they* KNOW at the same time they do not consent to it, nor have their heart at all in the affair, is something *worse* than begging the question." That is, as I suppose, (the same that he charged me with before) *telling a manifest untruth*. By which he plainly suggests, that I have *said* thus. Whereas I no where say, nor in any respect signify that I suppose, all unsanctified communicants do KNOW that they do not consent to the cove-

nant of grace. I never made any doubt, but that multitudes of unsanctified communicants are deceived, and think they do consent to it.

In p. 132, he says of me, " the author endeavors to show, that the admitting unsanctified persons tends to the ruin and and reproach of the Christian church ; and to the ruin of the persons admitted." But how widely different is this from what I express in the place he refers to ? *Inq.* p. 121. That which I say there, is, that " by express liberty given, to open the door to as many as please, of those who have *no visibility* of real saintship, and make no profession of it, nor pretension to it, is a method which tends to the ruin and great reproach of the Christian church, and also to the ruin of the persons admitted." I freely grant, and shew abundantly in my book, it is never to be expected, that all unsanctified men can be kept out, by the most exact attendance on the rules of Christ, by those that admit members.

In p. 136, Mr. Williams, wholly without grounds, speaks of me as representing, that " unconverted men make pretension to nothing but what God's enemies have, remaining in open and avowed rebellion against him." Whereas, I suppose that some natural men do profess, and profess truly, *many things*, which those have not, who are *open* and *avowed* enemies of God. They may truly profess that sort of moral sincerity in many things belonging to morality and religion, which avowed enemies have not : Nor is there any sentence or word in my book, which implies or intimates the contrary.

In p. 141, Mr. Williams evidently insinuates, that I am one of those who, " if men live never so strictly conformable to the laws of the gospel, and never so diligently seek their own salvation, to outward appearance, yet do not stick to speak of them, and act openly towards them, as persons giving no more public evidence, that they are not the enemies of God and haters of Jesus Christ, than the very worst of the heathen." But surely every one that has read my book, every one that knows my constant conduct, and manner of preaching, as well as writing, and how much I have written, said and done

against judging and censuring persons of an externally moral and religious behavior, must know how injurious this representation of me is.

## SECTION II.

### *Instances of the* second *thing mentioned as exceptionable in Mr.* Williams's *Method of managing this controversy,* viz. *His misrepresenting what is said in the writings of* others, *that he supposes* favors *his opinion.*

PERHAPS instances enough of this have already been taken notice of; yet I would now mention some others.

In what he says in reply to my answer to the eighth *objection,* he says, p. 108. "Mr. Stoddard does not say, if sanctifying grace be necessary to a person's lawful partaking of the Lord's supper, then God would have given some certain rule, whereby those WHO ARE TO ADMIT THEM, may know whether they have such grace, or not." Mr. Williams *there intimates* (as the reader may see) as if Mr. Stoddard spake so, that it is to be understood *disjunctively,* meaning he would *either* have given some certain rule to the church who admit them, or else to the persons themselves: So that by one means or other, the *Lord's supper might be restrained to converted men.* And he exclaims against me for representing as though Mr. Stoddard's argument were concerning a *certain rule, whereby those who are to admit them, may know whether they have grace,* (see the foregoing page) and speaks of it as nothing akin to Mr. Stoddard's argument. Now let the reader take notice of Mr. Stoddard's words, and see whether his argument be not something akin to this. He says expressly, *Appeal,* p. 75. "God does not bind his CHURCH to impossibilities. If he had made such an ordinance, he would give

gifts to his church, to distinguish sincere men from hypocrites, whereby the ordinance might have been attended. The *minor* is also evident: He has given no such rule to his CHURCH, whereby it may be restrained to converted men. This appears, because by the rule that they are to go by, they are allowed TO GIVE the Lord's supper to many unconverted men. For all visible signs are common to men converted, and unconverted." So that Mr. Stoddard in fact does say, "If sanctifying grace be necessary to a person's lawful partaking of the Lord's supper, then God would have given some certain rule, whereby the church (those who are to admit them) may know, whether they have grace, or not." Though Mr. Williams denies it, and says, this is nothing akin to Mr. Stoddard's argument; contrary to the plainest fact.

In p. 99, Mr. Williams, replying to my answer to the sixth objection, misrepresents Mr. Hudson, in the following passage. "This [i. e. baptism] says Mr. Hudson, makes them members of the body of Christ. And as for a particular, explicit covenant, besides the general, imposed on churches, I find no mention of it, no example nor warrant for it in all the scripture." Here Mr. Williams is still manifestly endeavoring to discredit my doctrine of an *explicit owning the covenant of grace;* and he so manages and alters Mr. Hudson's words, as naturally leads the reader to suppose that Mr. Hudson speaks against this: Whereas, he says not a word about it. What Mr. Hudson speaks of, is not an explicit owning the covenant of grace or baptismal covenant; but a *particular church covenant*, by which a particular society binds themselves explicitly, one to another, jointly to carry on the public worship. Mr. Hudson's words are, p. 19, "I dare not make a *particular, explicit, holy covenant to be the* FORM *of a* PARTICULAR *church, as this description seemeth to do;* because I find no mention of any such covenant, besides the general imposed on churches, nor example nor warrant for it in all the scripture." And then afterwards Mr. Hudson says, "But it is the general covenant sealed by *baptism*, and not this, that makes them members of the body of Christ." Mr. Williams, by citing distant passages in Mr. Hudson, and joining them, in

his own way, by particles and conjunctions, which Mr. Hudson does not use, and leaving out these words....*To be the form of a particular church, as this description seemeth to do*....quite blinds the mind of his reader, as to Mr. Hudson's true sense, which is nothing to Mr. Williams's purpose. Mr. Hudson says not a word here against, or about an *express or explicit covenanting*, or owning the covenant, in my sense: But in other places, in the same book, he speaks of it, and for it, as necessary for *all Christians*. Thus, in p. 69, "There is one individual, EXPRESS, external covenant; not only on God's part, but also it is one external, visible covenant, on men's part; which *all Christians*, as Christians, *enter into*, by their PROFESSED acceptance, and EXPRESS restipulation, and promised subjection and obedience; though not altogether in one place, or at one time." He speaks *again* to the same purpose, p. 100.

## SECTION III.

*Instances of the* third *thing observed in Mr.* Williams's *manner of arguing, viz. His pretending to* oppose *and* answer *arguments, by saying things which have* no reference *to them, but relate to* other *matters perfectly* foreign *to the subject of the argument.*

SUCH is his answer, (p. 37) to my argument from Isa. lvi. Particularly from those words, v. 6, 7, "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants....even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer," &c. For I say nothing under that argument (as Mr. Williams in his answer presumes) which supposes any antithesis or opposition here between the

state of the Gentiles and eunuchs *under the Old Testament, and under the gospel, as to terms of acceptance with God:* Nor any opposition as to a greater necessity of sanctifying grace, to the lawful partaking of ordinances, under the gospel, than under the law; as Mr. Williams also supposes in his arguings on this head. But the *opposition* I speak of, as plainly pointed forth in the chapter, is this: That whereas under the law, *not only* piety of heart and practice were required, but something *else*, even soundness of body and circumcision, it is foretold, that under the gospel, piety of heart and practice *only* should be required; that although they were eunuchs or uncircumcised, yet if it appeared that they *loved the name of the Lord*, &c. they should be admitted.

So when I argued, that Christ, in the latter part of the 7th chapter of Matth. representing the final issue of things, with regard to the visible church in general, speaks of all as being such as had looked on themselves to be interested in him as their Lord and Saviour, and had an opinion of their good estate; though the hope of some was built on the *sand*, and others on a *rock:* Mr. Williams, in his Reply, p. 40, 41, intirely overlooks the argument and talks about other things. He says, "Christ does not fault those that cried, *Lord, Lord*, for entering into covenant, but for not keeping covenant," p. 41. Here he runs back to another thing, relating to another argument, to which this has no reference, which he dwells wholly upon; and says nothing to the argument I use in that place.

So in his reply to what I say on the parable of the *wheat and tares*, p. 98, &c. He has entirely overlooked the argument. He says, to vindicate the objection, p. 99, "Which we think shows us the mind and will of Christ in this matter is, that his servants shall proceed only on certain established rules of his visible kingdom, and not upon any private rules of judging about them." Whereas, I never said, or supposed, that Christ's servants must not proceed *on certain established rules of his visible kingdom*, or that they ought to go upon *any private rules of judging;* but particularly and largely expressed my mind to the contrary, in my explaining the question:

And say, *Inq.* p. 5, "That it is properly a visibility to the eye of the *public* charity, and not of a *private* judgment, that gives a right to be received as visible saints by the public." And repeat the same thing again, p. 125.

And as to what Mr. Williams says in this place about *infants' being born in the church*, it entirely diverts the reader to another point (which I shall hereafter particularly consider) wholly distinct from the subject of the argument; which is about rules of *admission into the church*, whenever they are admitted. If persons are born in the church in complete standing, as Mr. Williams supposes, then they are not *admitted* at all, but in their *ancestors*. But however, the question returns, whether ancestors that are *unsanctified*, can have a lawful right to come into the church? Mr. Williams holds they may. The subject of the argument is about *bringing in* tares into the field, *whenever they are brought in*, whether sooner or later: And whether *tares* have a lawful right, by warrant from Christ to be in the *field*; supposing this to intend the church of Christ. The argument I produced to the contrary was, that the tares were introduced contrary to the owner's design, through men's infirmity, and Satan's procurement. Which argument, being intirely overlooked by my opponent, I desire it may be now particularly considered.

When the *Devil* brought in the *tares*, it is manifest, he brought in something that did not belong there; and therein counteracted the *owner* of the field, and did it under that very notion of crossing his design. *An enemy* (says the parable) *hath done this*. But how does this consist with the tares having a *lawful right*, by the owner's warrant and appointment, to have a standing in his field? If CHRIST by his institution has, in mercy to unsactified men given them a lawful right to come into the church, that it may be a means of their conversion; then it is a work of his kindness, as the compassionate Redeemer of souls, to bring them in; and not the doing of the great *enemy* and destroyer of souls. If the great physician of souls has built his church, as an infirmary in compassion to those that are sick, for this end that they may be brought in and healed there; shall it be said with

surprize, when such are found there, *how came these sick people* HERE! And shall the compassionate physician, who built the hospital, make answer, *an enemy hath done this!*

Besides, if Christ had appointed that unsanctified men should come into the church, in order to their conversion, it would be an instance of the *faithfulness* of his servants to bring in such. But the bringing in *tares* into the field, is not represented as owing to the faithfulness and watchfulness of the servants; but on the contrary, is ascribed to their *sleepiness* and remissness: They were brought in while *they slept*, who ought to have done the part of watchmen in keeping them out, and preventing the designs of the subtle enemy that brought them in. Perhaps some would be ready to make the reflection, that those churches whose practice is agreeable to the loose principles Mr. Williams espouses, do that at noon day, in the presence of God, angels and men, which the devil did in the dead of the night, *while men slept!*

Again, Mr. Williams, in his reply to my argument from that *Christian brotherly love*, which is required towards all members of the visible church, goes entirely off from the argument, to things quite alien from it. His first answer, p. 69, is, that "the exercise of this Christian love is not the term of communion or admission into the visible church;" which is perfectly foreign to the business. For the argument respects the *object* of this love, viz. visible saints, *that are to be thus beloved*; and not at all the qualifications of the *inherent subject of it*, or the *person that exercises this love.* If they that are admitted, are to be loved *as true saints*, or *for the image of Christ appearing in them, or supposed to be in them* (as Mr. Williams allows, p. 68) then it will follow that none are to be admitted, but such as can reasonably be the objects of Christian love, or be loved as *true saints*, and as those who *have the image of Christ appearing in them.* Whether the exercise of this love be the term of communion, or not; yet if we are commanded to exercise this love to all that are admitted to communion, then it will certainly follow, that some reasonable ground for being thus beloved, must be a term of communion in such as are admitted. To suppose it appoint-

ed, that we should love all that are admitted as true saints, and yet that it is not appointed that such as are admitted should exhibit any reasonable grounds for such a love, is certainly to suppose very inconsistent appointments.*

Mr. Williams's second answer p. 70, is no less impertinent; viz. "That men's right to communion in gospel ordinances does not depend upon the corruptions of other men, in their forbearing to love them." As if my argument were, that unless men are *actually loved*, as true saints, they have no right to communion! Whereas, the argument was very diverse, viz. That unless men have a *right to be so loved*, they have no right to communion. If men have an appearance, to reason, of being true saints, they may have a right to be loved as true saints, and to be admitted as such; however corrupt and void of love other men are: But without such an appearance to reason, it is *no corruption*, not to love them as true saints; unless it be corrupt, not to act without reason.†

As to Mr. Williams's third answer, and the misrepresentations it is built upon, it has already been taken notice of.

* "The apostles looked on all those, whom they gathered into churches or Christian congregations to eat the Lord's supper, as having the *truth* dwelling in them; and so they behoved, every one of them, to look upon one another: Seeing they could not love one another as brethren in the truth, without acknowledging that truth as dwelling in them. And so we see the apostles, in their writings to the churches, supposing all their members objects of this brotherly love. Christ's visible church then is the congregation of those whom the apostle could call the *saints and faithful in Christ Jesus*." —*Glass's Notes on Scripture texts*, Numb. 5, p. 32.

† A good argument might also be drawn from the corruption of unsanctified men; for that they are all so under the power of corruption, that they are not able to love saints, or any one else, with truly Christian love. Agreeable to what Mr. Stoddard says in his *Three Sermons*, p. 40, "Men are obliged to love their neighbors as themselves. But no natural men do in any measure live up to that rule; but men are great enemies one to another, *hateful* and *hating one another*. They do but little good one to another: They do a great deal of hurt one to another." Now is it reasonable to suppose, that such men have the proper qualifications, by divine institution, for a lawful right to be members of the visible family of God?

In Mr. Williams's reply to my answer to the *first objection* p. 81, &c. he wholly leaves the argument, and writes in support and defence of other matters, quite different from those which I mentioned, or had any concern with. The objection which I mentioned, and which had been much insisted on by some against my opinion, was, that church members are called *disciples*, or scholars; a name, that gives us a notion of the visible church as a school; and leads us to suppose, that all who profess that sort of faith and sincerity, which implies a disposition to seek Christian learning and spiritual attainments, are qualified for admission. But Mr. Williams says nothing at all in support of this objection. In answer to it, I endeavored to shew, that the name *disciples* given to church members, does not argue that unsanctified persons are fit to be members. He says nothing to shew, that it *does*. He says, if it will not follow from Christ's visible church's being represented as Christ's school, that it is in order to *all* good attainments; *yet it is in order to all that they have not yet attained.* Which is nothing to the purpose, but foreign to the thing in debate, viz. *Whether sanctifying grace is one of those things which are not yet attained by those that are lawfully in the church.* He there says nothing to prove, that it is; and especially to prove it from the meaning of the word, disciples; which was the argument in hand. He insists, that men may be sufficiently subject to Christ as their master and teacher, in order to be in his school or church, without grace: But then the thing to be proved, was, that church members being called *disciples* makes this evident, in order to support the argument or objection I was upon: Which argument is entirely neglected throughout all his discourse under this head.

So in his reply to my answer to the 11th objection, p. 123, &c. he wholly neglects the argument, and labors to support a different one. I endeavored, without concerning myself about the words of any argument in Mr. Stoddard's Appeal, to answer an argument abundantly used at Northampton against my doctrine, of unsanctified men's not having a right to come to the Lord's supper; which was this, "You may as

well say, that unsanctified men may not attend any other duty of worship;" and particularly, "you may as well forbid them to *pray*." As for Mr. Stoddard's objection, in these words, "If unsanctified men may attend all other ordinances or duties of worship, then they may lawfully attend the Lord's supper;" it was an argument I was not obliged to attend to in the words in which *he* delivered it, because it was not an argument brought against *my* scheme of things, but one very diverse: Since it is not my opinion, that unsanctified men may attend "all other ordinances or duties of worship, besides the Lord's supper;" for I do not suppose, such may offer themselves to baptism; which Mr. Stoddard takes for granted, in his argument. And therefore, what Mr. Williams says in support of it, is quite beside the business. As to the argument I was concerned with, taken especially from the lawfulness of unsanctified men's *praying*, to prove, that therefore it must be lawful for them to come to the Lord's supper, certainly if there be any consequence in it, the consequence depends on the truth of this supposition, *That the same thing which makes it lawful for a man to* pray, *also makes it lawful for him to come to the Lord's supper.* And seeing this position is proved to be not true, the argument falls to the ground. And Mr. Williams's nice observations and distinctions, of a *non obstante*, and a *simply* and *per se*, are nothing to the purpose.

This good reason (with several others) may be given why the same that makes it lawful for a man to pray and hear the word, will not make it lawful for him to partake of sacraments, viz. That the sacraments are not only duties, but covenant privileges, and are never lawfully given or received but under that notion. Whereas it is not so with prayer and hearing the word: And therefore they who have no interest in the covenant of grace, and are in no respect God's covenant people may lawfully hear the word and pray. But it is agreed on all hands, that they who are not in some respects God's covenant people, may not come to sacraments: And the reason is this, because sacraments are covenant privileges. And this same reason will prove that none but *true believers*, or those that have saving faith, the only condition of the cove-

nant of grace, have a right to sacraments. For, as was observed before, the condition of any covenant is the condition of all the benefits or privileges of that covenant. See Part II. Sec. 8.

## SECTION IV.

### *The* fourth *thing observed in Mr.* Williams's *method of managing the Controversy, particularly considered, viz. His advancing* new and extraordinary notions, *not only manifestly contrary to* Truth, *but also to the* common *and* received principles *of the Christian Church.*

THUS it is with regard to many things which have already been taken notice of. As, that men may be ungodly men, and yet truly profess to love God more than the world: That men may be professors of religion and have no true grace, and yet not be lukewarm, but serve God as their only master: That such may profess to be subject to Christ with all their hearts, and to give up all their hearts and lives to Christ, and speak true, &c. &c.

I shall now take notice of another remarkable instance of this, viz. That Mr. Williams, in his reply to my argument, from the epithets and characters given by the apostles to the members of the visible Christian churches, in their epistles, represents, p. 56, That there "is no difference in all the epithets and characters, which I had heaped up from the New Testament," from those that are given in the Old Testament, to the whole body of the Jewish church; which he elsewhere abundantly supposes to be the whole body of the Jewish nation; yea, even in their *worst* times, until the nation was re-

jected and cast off by God from being any longer his people; as I shall have occasion particularly to observe afterwards.

That it may be the easier judged, how manifestly this is contrary to truth, I shall here repeat some of those epithets and characters I before mentioned, which Mr. Williams has reference to. This is very manifest concerning most of them. But that I may not be tedious, I will now rehearse but a few instances, viz. being "made free from sin, and becoming the servants of righteousness;" having "the spirit of adoption;" being "the children of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ;" being "vessels of mercy prepared unto glory;" being such "as do not live to themselves, nor die to themselves; but live unto the Lord and die unto the Lord;" and who, "living and dying are the Lord's;" being those that have "all things for theirs, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; because they are Christ's;" being "begotten through the gospel;" being such as "shall judge the world;" being "washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;" being "manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, written, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart;" being such as "behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory;" being "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love; and predestinated unto the adoption of children;" being "sealed by that holy Spirit of promise;" being "quickened, though once dead in trespasses and sins;" being made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" being "dead, and having their life hid with Christ in God;" and being those that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, shall also appear with him in glory; having put off the old man with his deeds, and having put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him;" being "begotten again to a living hope....to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in hea-

en for them; who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; who love Christ though they have not seen him; in whom, though now they see him not, yet believing they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; having purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit; knowing him that is from the beginning; having their sins forgiven; having overcome the wicked one; having an unction from the holy one, by which they know all things; who are now the sons of God; and who, when Christ shall appear, shall be like him, because they shall see him as he is."

Now let the Christian reader judge, with what face of reason our author could represent, as though there were nothing in all these epithets and characters, more than used of old to be given to the whole nation of the Jews, and that, even in times of their greatest corruption and apostasy, till the nation was rejected of God! One would think, there is no need of arguing the matter with any that have read the Bible.

This representation of Mr. Williams's is not only very contrary to truth, but also to the common sentiments of the Christian church. Though I pretend not to be a person of great reading, yet I have read enough to warrant this assertion. I never yet (as I remember) met with any author that went the same length in this matter with Mr. Williams, but only Mr. Taylor of Norwich, in England, the author that lately has been so famous for his corrupt doctrine. In his piece which he calls *A Key to the Apostolic Writings*, where he delivers his scheme of religion (which seems scarcely so agreeable to the Christian scheme, as the doctrine of many of the wiser Heathen) he delivers the same opinion, and insists largely upon it; it being a main thing he makes use of to establish his whole scheme. And it evidently appears in the manner of his delivering it, that he is sensible it is exceeding far from what has hitherto been the commonly received sentiment in the Christian world. He supposes that as all those epithets and characters belong to the whole nation of the Jews, even in their most corrupt times, so they belong to all Christendom, even the most vicious parts of it; that the most

vicious men who are baptized, and profess to believe Jesus to be the Messiah, are "chosen before the foundation of the world, predestinated according to the foreknowledge of God, regenerated, justified, sanctified children of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, the spouse of Christ, the temple of God, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, being the family of heaven, &c. &c. And certainly he may with as good reason, and with the same reason, suppose this of all Christendom, even the most vicious parts of it, as of the whole nation of the Jews, however corrupt, till there was a national rejection of them.

Indeed it is manifest there is no other way of evading the force of the argument from the epistles, but by falling into Taylor's scheme. If his scheme of religion be not true, then it is plain as any fact in the New Testament, that all the Christian churches, through the whole earth, in the apostles' days, were constituted in the manner that I insist on. The scripture says ten times as much to demonstrate this matter, as it does about the manner of discipline officers, and government of the church, or as it does about the several parts of the public worship, or about the sanctification of the Christian sabbath.

## SECTION V.

### *Instances of the* fifth *and* sixth *particulars, in Mr.* Williams's *method of disputing, viz. his using confident and peremptory Assertions, and great* Exclamations, *instead of Arguments.*

WE have an instance of the *former*, in his reply to my answer to the 14th objection, viz. That "it is not unlawful for unsanctified men to carry themselves like saints. I objected against this, if thereby be meant, that they may lawfully car-

by themselves externally like saints in all respects, remaining ungodly ; and mentioned some things which belonged to the external duty of godly men, which no ungodly man, remaining such, may do. To which Mr. William, makes no reply ; but to prove the point says, " Mr. Stoddard knew, and all divines know, that the external carriage of some unsanctified men *is*, to the outward appearance, and the public judgment of the church, the same with the carriage of the saints ; and they know they are *bound* to such a behavior." And this peremptory, confident assertion is all the argument he brings to prove the thing asserted.

Again, I observe, that sometimes Mr. Williams uses *great exclamation*, as though he intended to alarm, and excite terror in his readers, and raise their indignation : Though they are perhaps never like to know *for what*. We have two very remarkable instances of this, p. 136 and 137, where he says, " I shall further take notice of two *extraordinary* and *surprizing* passages, if I understand them. And I have with great diligence tried to find out the meaning of them. One is p. 129, between the 17th and 23d lines ; if it be rightly printed." He does not quote my words : This mighty exclamation would have become too flat, and appeared ridiculous, if he had. The passage referred to is in these words...." Indeed such a tendency (i. e. a tendency to irreligion and profaneness) it would have, to shut men out from having any part in the Lord, in the sense of the two tribes and half, Josh. xxii. 25, or to fence them out by such a partition wall, as formerly was between Jews and Gentiles ; and so shut them out as to tell them, if they were never so much disposed to serve God, he was not ready to accept them : According to the notion the Jews seem to have had of the uncircumcised Gentiles." That is, plainly, to shut them out so as to tell them, that let them have hearts never so well and piously disposed to love and serve God, their love and service could not be accepted. This doubtless would have a tendency to discourage religion in men. And how the owning of it is an owning my scheme to have such a tendency, I do not know. Mr. Williams might as well have picked out any other sentence through all

the 136 pages of the book, and called it an *extraordinary passage*, and stood astonished over it, and told how he was ready to doubt whether it was rightly printed, and what *great diligence* he had used *to find out the meaning of it!*

The other extraordinary passage he stands thunderstruck with, is in these words; "may it not be suspected, that this way of baptizing children of such as never make any proper profession of godliness, is an expedient, originally invented for that very end, to give ease to ancestors with respect to their posterity, in times of great declension and degeneracy?" Mr. Williams knows, that through the whole of my book I suppose this practice of baptizing the children of such as are here spoken of, is *wrong*; and so does *he* too; for he abundantly allows, that persons, in order to be admitted to the privileges of visible saints, must make a profession of real piety, or gospel holiness. And if it be wrong, as we are both agreed, then surely it is nothing akin to blasphemy, to suspect that it arose from some bad cause.

## SECTION VI.

*Instances of the* seventh *particular, observed in Mr.* Williams's *way of disputing*, viz. *His wholly* overlooking *argument, pretending there is no argument, nothing to answer; when the case is far otherwise.*

THUS in his reply to my tenth argument, which was this, "It is necessary, that those who partake of the Lord's supper should judge themselves truly and cordially to accept Christ as their Saviour, and chief good; for this is what the actions, which communicants perform at the Lord's table, are a solemn profession of." I largely endeavored in p. 75, 76 and 77, to prove this, from the nature of those significant

actions, of receiving the symbols of Christ's body and blood when offered, representing their accepting the thing signified, as their spiritual food, &c. To all which Mr. Williams says, p. 74. "I do not find that Mr. Edwards has said any thing to prove the proposition, which is the whole argument offered here in proof of the point proposed to be proved, but only gives his opinion, or paraphrase of the purport and nature of the sacramental actions." Since Mr. Williams esteems it no argument, I desire it may be considered impartially whether there be any argument in it or no.

These sacramental actions all allow to be *significant* actions: They are a signification and profession of something: They are not actions without a meaning. And all allow, that these external actions signify something *inward* and *spiritual*. And if they signify any thing spiritual, they doubtless signify those spiritual things which they represent. But what *inward* thing does the outward taking or accepting the body and blood of Christ represent, but the *inward* accepting Christ's body and blood, or an accepting him in the heart? And what *spiritual* thing is the outward feeding on Christ in this ordinance a sign of, but a spiritual feeding on Christ, or the soul's feeding on him? Now there is no other way of the soul's feeding on him, but by that *faith*, by which Christ becomes our spiritual food, and the refreshment and vital nourishment of our souls. The *outward eating and drinking* in this ordinance is a sign of *spiritual eating and drinking*, as much as the *outward bread* in this ordinance is a sign of *spiritual bread*; or as much as the *outward drink* is a sign of *spiritual drink*. And doubtless those actions, if they are a profession of any thing are a profession of the things they signify.* To say, that these significant actions are appointed

* Mr. Stoddard owns, that the sacramental actions, both in baptism and the Lord's supper, signify *saving faith* in Christ. *Safety of Ap.* p. 170. "By baptism is signified *our fellowship with Christ* in his sufferings. That is signified hereby, that we have an interest in the virtue of his sufferings, that his sufferings are made over unto us, and that we do participate in the good and benefit of them. It was John *the Baptist's* manner, before he baptized persons, to teach them that they must *believe on Christ*. And the apostles and

to be a *profession* of something, but not to be a profession of the *things* they are appointed to *signify*, is as unreasonable as to say, that certain sounds or words are appointed to be a profession of something, but not to be a profession of the things signified by those words.

Again, Mr. Williams, in his reply to my answer to the *second objection*, with like contempt passes over the main argument which I offered, to prove that the nation of Israel were called *God's people*, and *covenant people*, in another sense besides a being visible saints. My argument in p. 85, 86, was this: That it is manifest, that something diverse from being visible saints, is often intended by that nation's being called *God's people*, and that that nation, the family of Israel, *according to the flesh*, and not with regard to any moral and religious qualifications, were in some sense adopted by God, to be his peculiar and covenant people; from *Rom. ix. 3, 4, 5.* "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren according to the flesh; who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the COVENANTS, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers," &c. I observed, that these privileges here mentioned, are spoken of as belonging to the Jews, not now as visible saints, not as professors of the true religion, not as members of the visible church of Christ (which they did not belong to but only as a people of such a nation, such a blood, such an external, carnal relation to the patriarchs, their ancestors; *Israelites, according to the flesh*: Inasmuch as the apostle is speaking here of the *unbelieving Jews*, professed unbelievers, that were out of the Christian church, and open, visible enemies to it; and such as had no right at all to the external

apostolical men would not baptize any adult persons but such as professed to *believe on Christ*. "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Baptism is mentioned as the evidence of faith" So concerning the Lord's supper, *Ibid.* p. 122, 123. "In this ordinance we are invited to put out *trust* in the death of Christ. *Take, eat; this is my body; and drink ye all of it.* When the body feeds on the sacramental bread and wine, the *soul* is to do that *which answers unto it;* The soul is to *feed* on Christ crucified; which is nothing else but the acting *faith* on him."

privileges of Christ's people. I observed further, that in like manner this apostle in Rom. xi. 28, 29, speaks of the same *unbelieving Jews*, that were enemies to the gospel, as in some respect an elect people, and interested in the calling, promises and covenants, God formerly gave their forefathers, and are still beloved for their sakes. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: But as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

All that Mr. Williams says, which has any reference to these things, is, "that he had read my explication of the "name of *the people of God*, as given to the people of Israel, &c. But that he confesses, it is perfectly unintelligible to him." The impartial reader is left to judge, whether the matter did not require some other answer.

## SECTION VII.

### *What is, and what is not* begging the question; *and how Mr.* Williams *charges me, from time to time, with begging the question, without cause.*

AMONG the particulars of Mr. Williams's method of disputing, I observed, that *he often causelessly charges me with begging the question, while he frequently begs the question himself, or does that which is equivalent.*

But that it may be determined with justice and clearness, who does, and who does not beg the question, I desire it may be particularly considered, what that is which is called *begging the question* in a dispute. This is more especially needful for the sake of illiterate readers. And here,

1. Let it be observed, that merely to suppose something in a dispute, without bringing any argument to prove it, is not begging the question: For this is done necessarily, in every dispute, and even in the best and clearest demonstrations.

One point is proved by another until at length the matter is reduced to a point that is supposed to need no proof; either because it is selfevident, or is a thing wherein both parties are agreed, or so clear that it is supposed it will not be denied.

2. Nor is begging the question the same thing as offering a weak argument, to prove the point in question. It is not all weak arguing, but one *particular way* of weak arguing, that is called *begging the question.*

3. Nor is it the same thing as *missing the true question*, and bringing an argument that is impertinent, or *beside the question.*

But the thing which is called *begging the question*, is the making use of the very point, that is the thing in debate, or the thing to be proved, as an argument to prove itself. Thus, if we were endeavoring to prove that none but godly persons might come to sacraments, and should take this for an argument to prove it, that none might come but such as have saving faith, taking this for granted; I should then beg the question; for this is the very point in question, whether a man must have saving faith or no? It is called begging the question, because it is a depending as it were on the courtesy of the other side, to grant me the point in question, without offering any argument as the price of it.

And whether the point I thus take for granted, be the main point in question, in the general dispute, or some subordinate point, something under consideration, under a particular argument; yet if I take this particular point for granted, and then make use of it to prove itself, it is begging the question.

Thus if I were endeavoring, under this *general controversy* between Mr. Williams and me, to prove that *particular point*, that we ought to love all the members of the Church as *true saints*; and should bring this as a proof of the point, that we ought to love all the members of the church as *true Christians*, taking this for granted; this is only the same thing, under another term, as the thing to be proved; and therefore is no argument at all, but only begging the question.

Or if the point I thus take for granted, and make use of as an argument, be neither the general point in controversy, nor

yet the thing nextly to be proved under a particular argument; yet if it be some known controverted point between the parties, it is begging the question, or equivalent to it: For it is begging a thing known to be in question in the dispute, and using it as if it were a thing allowed.

I would now consider the instances, wherein Mr. Williams, asserts or suggests that I have begged the question.

In p. 30 and 31, he represents the force of my reasoning as built on a supposition, that there is no unsanctified man, but what knows he has no desire of salvation by Christ, no design to fulfil the covenant of grace, but designs to live in stealing, lying, adultery; or some other known sin: And then says, "Is it not manifest that such sort of reasoning is a mere quibbling with words, and begging the question?" And so insinuates, that I have thus begged the question. Whereas I no where say, or suppose this which he speaks of, nor any thing like it. But on the contrary, often say, what supposes an unsanctified man may *think* he is truly godly, and that he has truly upright and gracious designs and desires. Nor does any argument of mine depend on any such supposition. Nay, under the argument he speaks of, I expressly suppose the contrary, viz. That unsanctified men who visibly enter into covenant, may be deceived.

In p. 38, Mr. Williams makes a certain representation of my arguing from Isa. lvi. And then says upon it, "It is no arguing, but only begging the question." But as has been already shown, that which he represents as my argument from that scripture, has no relation to my argument.

In p. 59, in opposition to my arguing from the epistles, that the apostles treated those members of churches which they wrote to, as those who had been received on a positive judgment, i. e. (as I explain myself) a proper and affirmative opinion, that they were real saints; Mr. Williams argues, that the apostles could make no such judgment of them, without either personal converse, or revelation; unless it be supposed to be founded on a presumption, that ministers who baptized them, would not have done it, unless they had themselves made such a positive judgment concerning their state:

And then adds these words, "This may do for this scheme, but only it is a begging the question." Whereas it is a point that never has been in question in this controversy, as ever I knew, Whether some ministers or churches might reasonably, and affirmatively suppose, the members of *other churches*, they are united with, were admitted on evidence of proper qualifications, (whatever they be, whether common or saving) trusting to the faithfulness of other ministers and churches. Besides, this can be no point in question between me and Mr. Williams, unless it be a point in question between him and himself. For he holds, as well as I, persons ought not to be received as visible Christians, without *moral evidence* (which is something positive, and not a mere negation of evidence of the contrary) of *gospel holiness*.

In p. 82 of my book I suppose, that none at all do truly subject themselves to Christ as their master, but those who graciously subject themselves to him, and are delivered from the reigning power of sin. Mr. Williams suggests, p. 83, that herein I beg the question. For which there is no pretext, not only as this is no known point in controversy between the parties in this debate; but also as it is a point I do not take for granted, but offer this argument to prove it, That they who have no grace, *are under the reigning power of sin*, and no man can truly subject himself to two such contrary masters, at the same time, as Christ and sin. I think this argument sufficient to obtain the point, without begging it. And besides, this doctrine, That they who have no grace do not truly subject themselves to Christ, was no point in question between me and Mr. Williams. But a point wherein we were fully agreed, and wherein he had before expressed himself as fully, and more fully than I. In his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 18, he speaks of "all such as do not depend on Christ, believe in him, and give up themselves, and all to him, as not true subjects to Christ; but enemies to him and his kingdom." We have expressions to the same purpose again, in p. 74 and 91, and in p. 94, of the same book, he says, "It is utterly inconsistent with the nature of the obedience of the gospel, that it should be a *forced subjection*. No

man is a *subject* of Christ, who does not make the laws and will of Christ his choice, and desire to be governed by him, and to live in subjection to the will of Christ, as *good*, and *fit*, and *best* to be the rule of his living, and *way to his happiness*. A forced obedience to Christ is *no obedience*. It is *in terms a contradiction*. Christ draws men with the cords of *love*, and the bands of a man. Our Lord has himself expressly determined this point." There are other passages in the same book, to the same purpose. So that I had no need to beg this point of Mr. Williams, since he had given it largely, and that in full measure, and over and over again, without begging.

In p. 120, he observes, " That to say such a profession of internal, invisible things is the rule to direct the church in admission....is to hide the parallel, and beg the question. For the question here is about the person's right to come, and not about the church's admitting them." Here Mr. Williams would make us believe that he does not know what begging the question is: For it is evident his meaning is, that my saying so is *beside the question*. But to say something beside the question is a different thing from begging the question, as has been observed. My saying that a *profession of invisible things* is the church's rule in admission, is not begging the question; because it is not, nor ever was any thing in question. For Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams himself are full in it, that a profession of *invisible things*, such as a believing that Christ is the Son of God, &c. is the church's rule. Yea, Mr. Williams is express in it, that a credible profession and visibility of *gospel holiness* is the church's rule, p. 139. Nor is my saying as above, *beside the question then in hand*, relating to the church of Israel's admitting to the priesthood, those that could not find their register. For that wholly relates to the rule of *admission* to the priesthood, and not to the priests' *assurance of their own right*. For, as I observed, if the priests had been never so fully assured of their pedigree, yet if they could not demonstrate it to others, by a public register, it would not have availed for their admission.

Again in p. 124, Mr. Williams charges me with begging the question, in supposing that sacraments are duties of wor-

ship, whose very nature and design is an exhibition of these vital and active principles and inward exercises, wherein consists the condition of the covenant of grace. He charges the same thing as a begging the question, p. 131. But this is no begging the question, for two reasons; (1.) Because I had before proved this point, by proofs which Mr. Williams has not seen cause to attempt to answer, as has been just now observed, in the last section. (2.) This, when I wrote was no point in question, wherein Mr. Williams and I differed; but wherein we were agreed, and in which he had declared himself as fully as I, in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 76. "When we attend sacraments (says he) we are therein visibly to profess our receiving Christ, and the graces of his Spirit, and the benefits of his redemption, on his own terms and offer, and giving up the all of our souls to him, on his call, covenant and engagement." And in the next preceding page but one, in a place forecited, he speaks of these acts "as mockery, hypocrisy, falsehood and lies, if they are not the expressions of faith and hope, and spiritual acts of obedience." So that I had no manner of need to come to Mr. Williams as a beggar for these things, which he had so plentifully given me, and all the world that would accept them, years before.

## SECTION VIII.

### *Shewing how Mr.* Williams *often* begs the Question *himself.*

THE question is certainly begged in that argument, which Mr. Williams espouses and defends, viz. "That the Lord's supper has a proper tendency to promote men's conversion." In the prosecution of the argument Mr. Williams implicitly yields, that it is not the apparent natural tendency alone, that is of any force to prove the point; but the apparent tendency

under this circumstance, that *There is no express prohibition.* And thus it is allowed, that in the case of express prohibition with respect to the scandalous and morally insincere, no seeming tendency in the nature of the thing proves the ordinance to be intended for the conviction and conversion of such. So that it is a thing *supposed* in this argument, that all morally insincere persons are expressly forbidden, but unsanctified persons not so. Now when it is supposed, that morally insincere persons are expressly forbidden, the thing meant cannot be, that they are forbidden in those very words; for no such prohibition is to be found; nor are men that live in sodomy, bestiality and witchcraft, any where expressly forbidden in this sense. But the thing intended must be, that they are very evidently forbidden, by plain implication or consequence. But then the whole weight of the argument lies in this *supposition*, that unsanctified persons are not also plainly and evidently forbidden; which is the very point in question. And therefore, to make this the ground of an argument to prove this point, is a manifest *begging the question.* And what Mr. Williams says to the contrary, p. 137, that Mr. Stoddard had proved this point before, avails nothing: For let it be never so much proved before, yet after all, to take this very point and make use of it *as a further argument* to prove itself, is certainly *begging the question.* The notion of bringing a new argument is bringing additional proof: But to take a certain point, supposed to be already proved, to prove itself with over again, certainly does not add any thing to the evidence.

Mr. Williams says my supposing *unconverted* persons, as such, to be as evidently forbidden, as *scandalous* persons, is as much begging the question. I answer, so it would be, if I made that point an argument to prove itself with, after Mr. Williams's manner. But this is far from being the case in fact.

And the question is again most certainly begged, in that other thing said to support this argument, viz. "That though the Lord's supper may seem to have a tendency to convert scandalous sinners, yet there is another ordinance appointed for that. Here the meaning must be, that there is another

ordinance *exclusive* of the Lord's supper; otherwise it is nothing to the purpose. For they do not deny but that there are other ordinances for the conversion of sinners, who are morally sincere, as well as of those who are scandalous. But the question is, Whether other ordinances are appointed for their conversion *exclusive* of the Lord's supper; or, Whether the Lord's supper be one ordinance appointed for their conversion? This is the grand point *in question*. And to take this point as the foundation of an argument, to prove this same point, is plainly begging the question. And it is also giving up the argument from the tendency, and resting the whole argument on another thing.

Mr. Williams again plainly begs the question in his Reply, p. 127, that God's prohibition is an argument, that God saw there was no such tendency for their conversion. His so saying supposes again, that there is no evident prohibition of unsanctified persons. In which he again flies to the very point in question, and rests the weight of his reasoning upon it.

Just in the same manner Mr. Williams begs the question in espousing and making use of that argument, "That all in external covenant, and neither ignorant nor scandalous, are commanded to perform all external covenant duties." Here it is supposed, that scandalous persons (which, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, must include all that have not moral sincerity) though in the external covenant, are expressly, that is, *evidently excepted and forbidden*: And that unsanctified men are not also *evidently forbidden*; which is the point in question. For if unsanctified men, though in external covenant, are as evidently forbidden and excepted, as scandalous men that are in external covenant, then the argument touches not one any more than the other. So that the argument is entirely a castle in the air, resting on nothing. The grand thing to be proved, first taken for granted, and then made an argument to prove itself.

In explaining the nature of *begging the question*, I observed, that it is begging the question, or equivalent to it, whether the point that is taken for granted, and made an argument of,

be the main point in controversy, or some particular, known disputed point between the controverting parties. I will now illustrate this by an example. It is a known disputed point in this controversy, whether in the parable concerning the *man without the wedding garment*, the king condemned the man for coming into the church without *grace*. Now supposing that I, because I look on the matter very clear, should, besides using it as one distinct argument, also make it the basis of other arguments; and should use it in opposition to the strongest arguments of my opposers, as if it were sufficient to stop their mouths, without offering any proper solution of those arguments: As, in case I were pressed with the argument from the passover, if I should fly to the *man without the wedding garment*; and should say, it is certain, this argument from the passover can be of no force against the express word of God in the 22d of Matth. For there *it is plain as any fact that ever the sun shone upon*, that the king condemns the man for coming into the church *without a wedding garment*; and it is plain as the sun at noon day, that the wedding garment is *grace*. And if when the argument from Judas's partaking of the Lord's supper is alleged, I should again fly to the *man without a wedding garment*, and say, whatever reasons Christ might have for admitting Judas, yet it is plainly revealed in Matth. xxii. 12, that God does not approve of men's coming into the church without a *wedding garment*. This would be an impertinent way of disputing, thus to answer one argument by throwing another in the way, which is contested, and the validity of which is denied. It is fair that I should have liberty to use the argument concerning the *wedding garment*, in its place, and make the most of it; but to use it as the support of other arguments, is to produce no additional proof. And thus from time to time, to produce the disputed hypothesis of one argument, for answer to the arguments of my antagonist, instead of solving those arguments, is flying and hiding from arguments, instead of answering them: Instead of defending the fortress which is attacked, it is dodging and flying from one refuge to another.

Mr. Williams acts this part from time to time in the use he makes of his great argument from the Old Testament church and its ordinances. Thus, in p. 8, he takes this method to answer my argument from the nature of visibility and profession, insisting that the Israelites, avouching and covenanting was a thing compatible with *ungodliness*; which he knows is a disputed point in this controversy, and what I deny. Again he makes use of the same thing in answer to my argument from the nature of covenanting with God, p. 23, 24. And again he brings it in, p. 25, 26, answering what I say, by confidently asserting that concerning the church of Israel, which he knows is disputed, and I deny; viz. That the covenanting of Israel did not imply a profession that they did already believe and repent: As in these words, "This was never intended nor understood, in the profession which the Israelites made; but that they *would* immediately, and from thenceforth comply with the terms of the covenant; and by the help of God, offered in it, *would* fulfil it. I am sure, this was what they professed; and I am sure, God declared he took them into covenant with him." And the same thing is brought in again to answer the same argument p. 31. The same thing is thrown in, once and again, as an answer to what I say of the unreasonableness of accepting such professions as leave room to judge the greater part of the professors to be enemies of God, p. 34. The same thing is cast in as a sufficient block in the way of my arguing from the unreasonableness of accepting such professions, as amount to nothing more than *lukewarmness*, p. 36. The same is brought in and greatly insisted on, to stop my mouth, in arguing from the epistles, p. 56, 57. The same is brought in again to enervate my argument concerning *brotherly love*, p. 69. And this is made use of as the support of other arguments; as that from the name *disciples*, and about the church's being the *school of Christ*; and to confute what I say, in answer to that argument, p. 84. The same is brought in as a support of the eleventh objection, and a confutation of my answer to that, p. 125. And again, in reply to what I say in answer to the nineteenth objection, p. 137.

Another thing, near akin to begging the question, is resting the weight of arguments on things asserted without proof; which, though they do not properly make a part of the controversy, yet are things not allowed by those on the other side. Thus does Mr. Williams in his arguing from the success of the Lord's supper in the conversion of sinners, p. 137, 138, supposing, not only that the Lord's supper, has been the *occasion* of the conversion of many, but that their communicating was the *means* of it. This he offers nothing to prove, and it is not allowed by those on the other side.* And it is what would be very hard to prove: If many were converted at the Lord's table (which yet is not evident) it would not prove, that their *partaking* was the means of their conversion; it might be only what they saw and heard there, which others may see and hear, that do not partake.

## SECTION IX.

### *Mr.* Williams's *Inconsistence with himself, in what he says in Answer to my* third *and* fourth *Arguments, and in his Reply to my Arguments from the* Acts, *and the* Epistles.

THE *last* thing observed in Mr. Williams's way of disputing, is his alleging and insisting on things wherein he is inconsistent with himself. His inconsistencies are of many

* Thus that very eminent divine, and successful minister of Christ, the late Dr. Doddridge, in his *Sermons on regeneration*, speaking of the means of regeneration, p. 251, 252, says, "I do not mention the administration of sacraments, upon this occasion; because, though they have so noble and effectual a tendency to improve men's minds in piety, and to promote Christian edification; yet I do not remember to have heard *of any instance*, in which they have been the *means* of men's *conversion*; which is not to be wondered at, as they are appointed for a very different end."

sorts: Sometimes he alleges those things that are inconsistent with the doctrine of those whose principles he pretends to maintain: He abundantly urges those things against my scheme, which are in like manner against his own: He often argues against those things which he allows, and strenuously insists on: He denies what he affirms, and affirms what he utterly denies; laying down and urging those things which are contrary to what he says in other books; and sometimes contrary to what he says in the same book: Yielding up the thing wherein the argument lies, yet strenuously maintaining the argument; allowing both premises and consequence, yet finding fault, and opposing: Sometimes urging things which are contrary to what he says under *different* arguments; and sometimes contrary to what he says under the *same* argument: Sometimes contradicting himself in the plain sense and meaning of what he says; at other times even in plain terms: Sometimes in effect contradicting *himself* in the same breath, and in the same sentence.

These various kinds of inconsistences have many of them been already observed: And will further appear by a particular consideration of what he says on several heads in what remains.

In my third argument, I insisted, that it could not be much to God's honor, for men to profess the assent of their judgment to the true religion, without pretending to any real friendship or love to God in their hearts. Mr. Williams, in opposition, p, 34, speaks of it as an honor to God, that secret hypocrites openly declare their conviction of the truth of God's word, &c. as *in the multitude of subjects is the king's honor*. And yet he himself represents the matter quite otherwise in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*; there, in p. 87, he has these words, "to promote the kingdom of Christ, is not to do that which may prevail with men to make pretences that they are Christians, or that they own Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and to call him Lord, Lord, when really he is not so."

In answer to my fourth argument, p. 35, Mr. Williams says, I make "a great misrepresentation of the matter, in in-

sinuating that according to Mr. Stoddard's scheme, [which scheme he declares himself to be of] they who are admitted make a pretence of NO MORE than moral sincerity, and common grace." And yet he insists, that when Philip required a profession of the Eunuch's faith, his question designed NO MORE than an *assent of the understanding*, p. 51, which he there distinguishes from saving faith: And says, that it is morally certain that his enquiry *amounted to* NO MORE. And yet in his discourse on the same head, p. 49, he inveigh's against me for supposing it a consequence of the opinion of my opposers, that the Eunuch, in order to come to sacraments, had no manner of need to look at any such qualification in himself as saving faith. Certainly the Eunuch, in making answer to Philip's enquiry, had no need to look at *any more* than Philip enquired after. In p. 50. he says, "It *does not* seem at all probable, that Philip *enquired any thing* about the regeneration or sanctification of the Eunuch." And yet in the next preceding sentence, he refers me over to another judgment, for representing as though my opposers supposed, that it was *no matter whether a person coming to gospel ordinances had any grace or not, and had no manner of need to enquire any thing about his sincerity.*

And though he highly blames me for insinuating, as above, that my opposers *require a pretence of* NO MORE *than common grace and moral sincerity;* yet in opposition to my insisting on a profession of saving faith, speaking of the profession which the apostles required, he says, p. 58. "It is certain, that a profession in these words, which was wont to be required, does sometimes import NO MORE than a conviction of the understanding on moral evidence." So he says concerning those whose admission into the Christian church we have an account of in Acts ii. (p. 45.) "There is not one word said about ANY OTHER FAITH, but believing that Jesus was the Messiah." And if so, then certainly NO MORE was professed.

In p. 35, he allows, that all visible saints who are not truly pious, are *hypocrites;* and yet maintains, that the profession they make is no more than what they may make and speak

HONESTLY and TRULY, p. 105 and 47. How then are they all hypocrites, if they are *honestly and truly* what they profess to be?

In supporting the argument from John's baptism, he insists, that the profession the people made, did not imply, that they *had savingly repented*: And that John openly supposed, that their profession did *not* imply it, in what he said to them, p. 97. And in p. 98, he says, "we read not a word of John's enquiring whether these people made a credible profession of true piety." And he there manifestly suggests, that John knew they were not pious, as *he knew they were a generation of vipers*. Yet how often elsewhere does Mr. Williams insist, that men, in order to come to sacraments, *must* make a credible profession of true piety and gospel holiness, and that they must in a judgment of charity be supposed to have real godliness?

In answer to my argument from the instance of the converts in Acts ii. Mr. Williams, speaking of their convictions, and being *pricked in their heart*, p. 45, says, "They *were convinced that Jesus was the true Messiah* and Saviour, whom God had promised to Israel, whereupon convinced of their sin, they cry out, *what shall we do?* To which the apostle replies, *repent and be baptized....in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*. There is not one word said about any other faith, but *believing that Jesus was the Messiah*." And in the two next pages Mr. Williams insists, that their *gladly receiving the word* can by no necessity from the text imply more, than that they now *believed that Jesus was the Messiah*, and that it was matter of joy to them that the *Messiah* was come. So that we have this *inconsistent* account of the matter from Mr. Williams. That these people are first *convinced that Jesus is the Messiah*, and this is cause of *distress* to them: And they ask, *what they shall do?* Hereupon the apostle directs them *to believe that Jesus is the Messiah*; which they believed *already*, before they asked the question: But however, when they heard this, *they believed that Jesus was the Messiah*; they now found it out, as a *new* thing they did not know of before, and are *glad* at the joyful discovery;

though just before they believed the same thing, and the discovery filled them with distress.

In p. 47, whereas it is said concerning these new converts, "that such were added to the church, as were *the saved*." Mr. Williams says, "the like appellation is given to the whole church of Israel." And in this, and the foregoing page, he insists, that these converts were before *in* the church of Israel, and were not now *admitted*, but only continued as some of God's people. But if these things were so, they were *the saved* before their conversion to Christianity, as much as after; and others that were in the Jewish church, that were not yet converted to Christianity, were as much *the saved* as they. And then why is their being *saved* spoken of as what was now brought to pass, and as a thing that distinguished the believing Jews from others?

In the same page Mr. Williams says, "we do not dispute but that the apostles *supposed* and *believed* in charity, so far as they had any thing to do to suppose or believe any thing about it, that God had given these persons saving repentance, and an heart purifying faith." And yet in p. 61. He speaks of the apostles as supposing the contrary of many of those that had been admitted into the primitive church; in that they speak of them as such *temples* of God as might be *destroyed*: "Which (says Mr. Williams) cannot be true of sanctified persons, unless they can fall from grace."

In his answer to the argument from Philip and the Eunuch, he supposes, that *believing with all the heart* is only such a belief of the doctrine of Christianity as *unsanctified* men may have. And yet in that forementioned place *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 144, he says, a man before he is "renewed by the Holy Ghost, has a view of the truth as a doubtful, uncertain thing." And in the book now especially attended to, he in effect owns the thing, which he earnestly disputes against in reply to this argument. He grealy insists, that the phrase, *with all the heart*, does not signify gracious sincerity; and yet he owns it does. P. 51 and 52, he owns, that according to the usual way of speaking *among mankind*, both in our days, and also in times when the scriptures were written, "God

requires men to give him their hearts, "intending by it such a sincerity as God will own and accept; which besure (says he) is nothing else than a gracious sincerity; which never can be, unless the whole soul and all its faculties be engaged for God." Then afterwards adds, "But how will this any ways prove, that when *men* use the same expressions, it must necessarily be understood in the same sense?" And yet in the same breath, he had observed that God in thus using the phrase, uses it according to the usual manner of speaking AMONG MANKIND. He gives this reason why the phrase need not be understood in the same sense when used by men, that men are not searchers of hearts. But the argument is about the phrase as Philip put it to the Eunuch's own conscience, which was or ought to be a searcher of his heart.

And by the way I must observe, that Mr. Williams would have done well, if he was able, to have *reconciled* these repugnant things, taken notice of in my book; "That *with the heart* man believeth to righteousness, and that if men believe with the heart that God raised Christ from the dead, they shall be saved;" agreeable to Rom. x. 9, 10. And yet that men may "believe this with their heart, yea, and with all their heart, and still not believe to righteousness, nor ever be saved." So likewise, "That whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God;" as in 1 John iv. 15. And that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God," 1 John v. 1. And yet that man may believe this very thing with all his heart, and confess it with his mouth; and this in the language of the same apostles and primitive ministers; and still not *be born of God*, nor have a spark of grace in him.

It may also be worthy to be considered, whether it be reasonable to suppose, that the faith which a man must profess, in order to being in the visible kingdom of Christ, and not in the visible kingdom of the devil, must not be some *other* sort of faith than that which the devil has: That seeing the very design of a public profession of religion is to declare on which side we are, whether on Christ's or the devil's, no other faith is required to be professed, than such as Satan himself has,

and such as is not at all inconsistent with being a "willing, cursed servant and slave of the devil, and enemy to Christ;" as Mr. Williams says, all unsanctified men are.

Mr. Williams, in his reply to my argument from the epistles, p. 55, speaks of it as an unaccountable thing, that I should represent as if, according to the principles of my opposers, the primitive Christians were not admitted "under any such notion of their being REALLY godly persons, or with any respect to such a character:"* and yet in his discourse on the same head, he abundantly insists, that it was not REAL holiness, but only FEDERAL holiness, which was the qualification, which the apostles had reference to in admitting them; expressly from time to time, distinguishing *federal* holiness from *real.* In p. 56, and 57, "It makes it evident (says he) that this manner of treating churches and bodies of men, and such expressions used to them and of them, are to be understood in *no other sense*, than to signify FEDERAL holiness." So in p. 60, he affirms the same thing once and again, distinguishing *federal* holiness from *real.* He says, "They formed no positive judgment of their REAL piety. And knew nothing at all about them, but only that they were FEDERALLY holy." And again, "They did not make a positive judgment, that these persons were REALLY godly; and the high characters they gave them, and the hopes they expressed concerning them, could be understood in *no other sense* than as holding forth a FEDERAL holiness." So that by this they expressed no HOPES concerning any thing more than their *federal* holiness, as distinguished from *real.* And he argues earnestly through the two next pages, that they could not be looked upon, many of them, as having *real* holiness. How does this consist with their being treated as *visible saints; under the notion of their having* real holiness, *and from respect to such a character appearing on them?* Or with none's being visible saints, but such as have a credible visibility of gospel holiness?

* So in p. 132, he exclaims against me thus; "After all this, to repeat it again and again, that these persons have no visibility to reason of REAL saintship, &c. I think, gives better ground to retort Mr. Edwards's words."

So in p. 63, he speaks of the gross scandals of many of those the apostles wrote to, as an absolute proof, that they considered them only as *federally* holy; which he in the same place distinguishes from *real* holiness. Then how were they treated (as he insists) as those that "had the character of REAL PIETY appearing on them, and as making a credible profession of gospel holiness, and real Christianity?" Which he abundantly allows, all must make in order to being visible saints. See also p. 64.

In p. 58, Mr. Williams insists, that it does not appear, that those who are admitted into the primitive church, "made a declaration that they had saving faith, but ONLY that they engaged to that faith." But how does this consist with what he abundantly says elsewhere, That they must *pretend* to real piety, *make a profession* of gospel holiness, exhibit *moral evidence*, that they have such holiness, &c? These things are something else besides *engaging to* saving faith *and* gospel holiness *for the future*.

## SECTION X.

### *The Unreasonableness and Inconsistence of Mr.* Williams's *Answer to my Argument from the Man without a* Wedding Garment, *and concerning* Brotherly Love, *and from* 1 *Cor.* xi. 28, *and of what he says in support of the fifteenth Objection.*

MR. WILLIAMS, in answering my argument from Matth. xxii. 11, allows that the *king's house*, into which the guests came, is the visible church, p. 43, 44. So that the man's *coming in hither*, is his coming into the visible church. Nor does he at all dispute but that by the *wedding garment* is meant saving grace; (for truly the thing is too evident to be

disputed :) And yet he says, p. 43, " We read nothing of Christ's condemning the man for coming into the church without saving grace." So that Mr. Williams's answer amounts plainly to this ; *The king, when he comes to judgment, will say, I do not at all condemn thee for coming in hither without a wedding garment : But, friend, how camest thou in hither without a wedding garment ?* And no wonder ; the case is too plain to allow of any other than such a lamentable refuge as this is. If the *wedding garment* be saving grace, which is not denied ; and if coming into the *king's house* be coming into the visible church, as Mr. Williams owns : Then if the king condemns the man for coming into the house without a wedding garment, he condemns him for coming into the visible church without saving grace.

It is plain, the thing the man is blamed for, is something else than simply *a being without grace*, or without a wedding garment. The king's words have respect to this as it stands in connexion with *coming into the king's house*. If Christ has commanded men who are *not converted*, to come into the church, that they may *be converted*, he will never say to them, upon their obeying this command, " Friend, how camest thou in hither before thou wast converted ?" Which would be another thing than blaming him simply for not being converted. If a man, at his own cost sets up a school, in order to teach ignorant children to read ; and accordingly ignorant children should go thither in order to learn to read, would he come into the school, and say in anger to an ignorant child that he found there ; " How camest thou in hither before thou hadst learnt to read ?" Did the Apostle Paul ever rebuke the heathen, who came to hear him preach the gospel, saying, " how came you hither to hear me preach, not having grace ?" This would have been unreasonable, because preaching is an ordinance appointed to that end, that men might obtain grace. And so in Mr. Williams's scheme is the *Lord's supper*. Can we suppose that Christ will say to men in indignation, at the day of judgment, " How came you to presume to use the means I appointed for your conversion, before you were converted ?

It is true the servants were to invite all, *both bad and good* to come to the feast, and to *compel them to come in*; but this does not prove, that bad men, *remaining* in their badness, have a lawful right to come. The servants were to invite the vicious as well as the moral; they were to invite the *heathen*, who were especially meant by them that were *in the high ways and hedges*: Yet it will not follow that the heathen, while remaining heathen, have a lawful right to come to Christian sacraments. But heathen men must turn from their heathenism, and come; so likewise wicked men must turn from their wickedness, and come.

I endeavored to prove, that *that brotherly love*, which is required towards the members of the *Christian church* in general, is such a love as is required to those *only* whom we have reason to look upon as true saints. *Mr.* Williams disputes, through two pages (p. 66, 67) against the force *of my* reasoning to prove this point; and yet when he has done, he allows the point. He allows it, p. 68, as an undisputed thing, that "it is the image of God and Christ appearing or supposed to be in others, that is the ground and reason of this love." And so again p. 71, he grants, that "there must be some apprehension, and judgment of the mind, of the saintship of persons," in order to this brotherly love. Indeed he pretends to differ from me in this, that he denies the need of any *positive judgment*: But doubtless the judgment or apprehension of the mind must be as positive as the love founded *on that* apprehension and judgment of the mind.

In p. 78, 79, he seems to insist that what the apostle calls *unworthy communicating*, is eating in a greedy, disorderly and irreverent manner: As though men might communicate without grace, and yet not communicate *unworthily*, in the apostle's sense. But if so, the apostle differed much in his sense of things from Mr. Williams. The latter says, in his sermon on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 77, 78, "These outward acts of worship, when not performed from faith in Christ, and love to God, are *mocking* God; in their own nature a *lie*; the *vilest wickedness*; instead of being that religion, which Christ requires, it is *infinitely contrary* to it. The most *flagrant and*

*abominable impiety, and threatened with the severest damnation.*" Is not this a communicating *unworthily* enough of all reason!

In p. 132, 133, Mr. Williams strenuously opposes me in my supposition, that the way of freely allowing all that have only *moral sincerity* to come into the church, tends to the reproach and ruin of the church. On the contrary he seems to suppose it tends to the establishing and building up of the church. But I desire that what Mr. Stoddard says, in his sermon on the *Danger of speedy Degeneracy*, may be considered under this head. He there largely insists, that the prevailing of unconverted men, and unholy professors among a people is the principal thing that brings them into danger of *speedy degeneracy* and corruption. He says, that "where this is the case, there will be many bad examples, that will corrupt others; and that unconverted men will indulge their children in evil, will be negligent in their education; and that by this means their children will be very corrupt and ungoverned;* that by this means the godly themselves that are among them, will be tainted, as sweet liquor put into a corrupt vessel will be tainted; that thus a people will grow blind, will not much regard the warnings of the word, or the judgments of God; and that they will grow weary of religious duties after a while; and that many of their leading men will be carnal; and that this will expose a people to have carnal ministers and other leading men in the town and church."

And I desire also that here may be considered what Mr. Williams himself says, in that passage forecited, p. 86, 87, of his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness;* where, in explaining what it is to promote the kingdom of Christ, he says negatively, that "it is not to do that which may prevail on men to make pretences that they are Christians, and that

* If we have reason to expect it will be thus with ungodly parents, with respect to their children, then certainly such cannot reasonably expect ministers and churches should admit their children to baptism, in a dependance that they do *give them up to God*, and *will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, if they make no profession that implies more than moral sincerity; and none but what wicked men may as well make as the godly, and speak true.

they own Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and to *call him Lord, Lord*, when *really* he is not so." Which he supposes is the case with all unsanctified professors; for in the same book, he abundantly declares, that they who make such pretences and have not true faith and love, make *false* and *lying* pretences; as has been several times already observed.

## SECTION XI.

### *The* Impertinence *of Arguments, that are in like manner against the schemes of* both *the controverting parties: And this exemplified in what Mr.* Williams *says concerning the notion of* Israel's *being* the People of God, *and his manner of arguing concerning the Members of the primitive* Christian *Church.*

INASMUCH as in each of the remaining instances of Mr. Williams's arguing, that I shall take notice of, he insists upon and urges arguments, which are in like manner against his own scheme, as against mine, I desire that such a way of arguing may be a little particularly considered.

And here I would lay down this as a maxim of undoubted verity.....That an argument, brought to support one scheme against another, can avail nothing to the purpose it is brought for, if it is at the same time against the scheme it would *support*, in like manner as against that which it would *destroy*.

It is an old and approved maxim, "That argument which proves too much, proves nothing," i. e. If it proves too much for him that brings it, proves against himself in like manner as against his opponent, then it is nothing to help his cause. The reason of it is plain: The business of a dispute is to make one cause good against another, to make one scale

heavier than the other. But when a man uses an argument which takes alike out of both scales, this does not at all serve to make his side preponderate, but leaves the balance just as it was.

Arguments brought by any man in a dispute, if they are not altogether impertinent, are against the difference between him and his opponent, or against his opponent's differing from him : For wherein there is no difference, there is no dispute. But that can be no argument against his opponent's differing from him, which is only an argument against what is common to both, and taken from some difficulty that both sides equally share in. If I charge supposed absurdities or difficulties against him that differs from me, as an argument to show the unreasonableness of his differing ; and yet the difficulty is not owing to his differing from me, inasmuch as the same would lie against him, if he agreed with me, my conduct herein, is both very impertinent and injurious.

If one in a dispute insists on an argument, that lies equally against his own scheme as the other, and yet will stand to it that his argument is good, he in effect stands to it that his own scheme is not good ; he supplants himself, and gives up his own cause, in opposing his adversary ; in holding fast his argument, he holds fast what is his own overthrow ; and in insisting that his *argument* is solid and strong, he in effect insists that his own *scheme* is weak and vain. If my antagonist will insist upon it that his argument is good, that he brings against *me*, which is in like manner against *himself ;* then I may take the same argument, in my turn, and use it against him, and he can have nothing to answer ; but has stopped his own mouth, having owned the argument to be conclusive.

Now such sort of arguments as these, Mr. Williams abundantly makes use of.

For instance, the argument taken from the whole nation of of Israel's being called *God's people*, and every thing that Mr. Williams alleges, pertaining to this matter, is in like manner against his own scheme as against mine : And that, let the question be what it will ; whether it be about the qualifications which make it lawful for the church to *admit*, or about the law-

fulness for persons' *coming* to sacraments; whether it be about the *profession they should make before men*, or the *internal qualification they must have in the sight of God.* And what Mr. Williams says to the contrary, does not relieve the argument from this embarrassment and absurdity. After *all* he has said, in turning and twisting it, to save the force of it, the argument, if any thing related to the controversy, is plainly this, "That because the whole nation of Israel were God's *visible people* [which is the same as *visible saints*] therefore the scripture notion of *visible saintship* is of larger extent than mine; and the scripture supposes those to be visible saints, which my scheme does not suppose to be so.

But if this be Mr. Williams's argument, then let us see whether it agrees any better with his own scheme. Mr. Blake (Mr. Williams's great author) in his book on the *Covenant*, p. 190, insists that "Israel, at the very *worst is owned* as God's covenant people, and were called God's people;" and *p.* 149, that "all the congregation of Israel, and every one of them, are called holy, and God's own people, even Corah and his company." And p. 253, 254, he urges, that every one who is descended from Jacob, even the *WORST* of Israel, in their *LOWEST* state and condition, were God's people in covenant, called by the name of God's people." And Mr. Williams herein follows Mr. Blake and urges the same thing; that this nation was God's covenant people, and were called God's people, at the time that they were carried captive into Babylon, p. 24, when they were undoubtedly *at their worst*, more corrupt than at any other time we read of in the Old Testament; being represented by the prophets, as overrun with abominable idolatries, and other kinds of the most gross, heaven daring impieties, most obstinate, abandoned, pertinacious and irreclaimable in their rebellion against God, and against his word by his prophets. But yet these, it is urged, are called the *people of God*; not agreeable to *my* notion of visible saintship, but agreeable to Mr. Williams's. What his notion of *visible saints* is, he tells us in p. 139. He there says expressly that he "does not suppose persons to be visible saints, unless they exhibit a credible profession and visibility of gospel ho-

liness." Now do those things said about those vile wretches in Israel agree with this? Did they exhibit moral evidence of *gospel holiness!* But if we bring the matter lower still, and say, the true notion of visible saintship is a credible appearance and moral evidence of *moral sincerity;* does this flagrant, open, abandoned, obstinate impiety, consist with moral evidence of such sincerity as that? It is as apparent therefore, in Mr. Williams's scheme as mine, that when these are called God's people, it is in some other sense than that wherein the members of the Christian church are called *visible saints.* And indeed the body of the nation of Israel, in those corrupt times, were so far from being God's church of visibly pious persons, visibly endowed with *gospel holiness*, that *that* people, as to the body of them, were visibly and openly declared by God, to be a *whore* and a *witch*, and her children *bastards*, or *children of adultery.* Isa. lvii. 3. "Draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore." We have the like in other places. And so the body of the same people in Christ's time (which Mr. Williams supposes even then to be branches of the *true olive*, in the same manner as the members of the Christian church were in the apostles' times) are visibly declared not to be God's children, or children of the true church, but bastards or an adulterous brood. Matth. xii. 39. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. V. 45, Even so shall it be with this wicked generation." And certainly the people were then, visibly and in the eyes of men, such as Christ had visibly and openly and in the sight of men declared them to be.

If the question be not concerning the *visibility* which makes it *lawful for others to admit persons*, but concerning the *qualifications which render it lawful for them to come*, still the objection is no more against *my* scheme, than against Mr. Williams's. He, in page 84, 85 and 86, says, that "such openly scandalous persons ought not to be admitted into the church;" insinuating, that these scandalous people among the Jews were otherwise when they were admitted at first: But that being taken in, and not cast out again, *it was lawful for them to be there*, and they had a lawful right to the privi-

leges of the church. But this supposition, that all that are lawfully admitted by others, may lawfully come into the church, and lawfully continue to partake of its privileges *till cast out*, is utterly inconsistent with Mr. Williams's own scheme. For according to his scheme, it is not lawful for men that are not *morally sincere*, to partake of the privileges of the church; but yet such may, in some cases, be lawfully admitted by others; for he maintains, that in admitting them, they are not to act as *searchers of hearts*, even with regard to their moral sincerity; and so argues, p. 106, That Christ might give Judas the sacrament, when not morally sincere. If Christ, as head of the visible church might admit Judas to his table, when he knew he was not morally sincere, and when it was not lawful for Judas himself to come; then it is lawful for men to admit some, for whom *it* is not lawful to be there; contrary to Mr. Williams's assertion in *p. 86*.

It is true, that persons may become grossly scandalous, after having been regularly admitted on Mr. Williams's principles, on a profession in words of indiscriminate signification. And so they may, after being regularly admitted, according to my principles, on a credible profession of gospel holiness in words of a determinate meaning: And therefore, the gross wickedness of such apostates as we read of in scripture, is no more an objection against my principles, than his.

Just in the same manner is Mr. Williams's arguing, p. 59, 60, 61, 62, 63. concerning the members of churches mentioned in the epistles, equally against his own scheme and mine. He largely insists upon it, that the apostle speaks of many of them as grossly scandalous, notoriously wicked persons, idolaters, hereticks, fornicators, adulterers, adulteresses, &c. &c. In his arguing from these things, he is inconsistent with his own principles, two ways. (1.) Such a character is as plainly inconsistent with the character he insists on as necessary to render it lawful for persons to come to sacraments, as mine. And (2.) it is utterly inconsistent with what he often declares to be his notion of visible saintship, necessary to a being admitted by others; so no more an argument against my opinion of visible saintship, than his own.

## SECTION XII.

### *The great Argument from the Jewish Sacraments, of the* Passover *and* Circumcision, *considered.*

AS has been observed concerning the argument from the Jewish nation, so the argument from the Jewish ordinances, if it be against my scheme, is as plainly, in every respect, against Mr. Williams's.

This grand argument, as plainly expressed, or implied in Mr. Stoddard's words (which Mr. Williams insists I should attend to) is this:

God did expressly command all the nation of Israel to be *circumcised;* and he also expressly commanded the whole nation to come to the *passover;* excepting such as were ceremonially unclean, or in a journey. Therefore it was lawful for unsanctified men to come. (See Mr. Stoddard's sermon on the *Controv.* p. 8, and *Appeal*, p. 51.) The want of sanctification never was alleged by any man as a reason for forbearing the passover. *Appeal*, p. 51. Unsanctified persons' attending this ordinance is never charged on them as a sin in scripture. *Ibid.* Jesus Christ himself partook of the passover with Judas; which proves it to be lawful for unsanctified men to come to the passover. But such as might lawfully come to the passover, may lawfully come to the Lord's supper.

Now let us consider what are the qualifications, which are necessary, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, to a lawful coming to Christian sacraments; and then see whether this objection, in every part of it, and every thing that belongs to it, be not as plainly and directly against his own scheme, as mine.

According to Mr. Williams, it is not lawful for a man to come, unless he is *morally sincere. Pref.* p. 2, 3, 21, 25, 30, 35, 36, 111, 115. And, according as he has explained that moral sincerity, which is necessary in order to come to sacra-

ments, it implies "a real conviction of the judgment and conscience of the truth of the great things of religion....a deep conviction of a man's undone state without Christ, and an earnest concern to obtain salvation by him....a fervent desire of Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace, with an earnest purpose and resolution to seek salvation on the terms of it; a man's being willing to do the utmost that he can, by the utmost improvement of his natural and moral power, in the most earnest and diligent use of the ordinances of salvation; being resolved for Christ, coming to a point, being engaged for heaven; having a settled determination of the the judgment and affections for God; giving up all his heart and life to Christ, &c. &c."* Such moral sincerity as this is necessary, according to Mr. Williams, to be found in professing Christians, in order to their *lawful* coming to Christian sacraments. And he says they are *received into* the church, "on like terms, by entering into covenant in like *manner*, as the Jews; and that their holiness, both real and federal, is the same with theirs. P. 56, 57, 61, 65. So that according to this scheme, none but those that had such qualifications as these, such a sincerity and engagedness in religion as this, might lawfully come to the passover. But now do the things alleged agree any better with this his scheme, than with mine? If the case be so, to what purpose is it alleged, that God, in Numb. chap. ix. expressly commanded all of that perverse, rebellious and obstinate generation in the wilderness, and the whole nation of Israel, in all generations, to keep the *passover*, excepting such as were ceremonially unclean or in a journey, without the exception of any other? Was every one else of such a character as is above described? Was every one under deep convictions, and persons of such earnest engagedness in religion, of such settled, strong resolution to give up their utmost strength and all their heart and life to God, &c.? Mr. Williams suggests, that "those who had not moral sincerity are expressly excepted from the command," p. 93. But I wish he had mentioned the place of

* P. 10, 11, 30, 31, 35, 36, 53, 83, 125, and many other places.

scripture. He cites Mr. Stoddard, who says, "God appointed sacrifice to be offered for scandal, with confession." But where did God appoint sacrifice for the *want* of such sincerity, for the *want* of such deep conviction, earnest desire, and fixed resolution, as Mr. Williams speaks of? And where are such as are without these things *expressly excepted* from the command to keep the passover? And besides there were many scandalous sins, for which *no sacrifice* was appointed: As David's murder and adultery, and the sin of idolatry, (which the nation in general often fell into) and many other gross sins. Nor was there any precept for *deferring* the keeping of the passover, in case of scandalous wickedness, or moral uncleanness, until there should be opportunity for cleansing by *sacrifice*, &c. as was in the case of ceremonial uncleanness.

Mr. Stoddard says, "The want of sanctification was never alleged by any man as a reason for forbearing the passover. So, where do we read in any part of the Bible, that ever the *want* of such deep conviction, &c. as Mr. Williams speaks of, or indeed any scandalous moral uncleanness, was ever alleged by any man as a reason for forbearing to eat the passover? Mr. Stoddard urges that unsanctified persons attending the passover was never charged on them as a *sin*. And where do we read of persons' coming without such *moral sincerity*, being any more charged on them as a *sin*, than the other? We have reason to think, it was a common thing for parents that had no such moral sincerity, yea, that were grossly and openly wicked, to have their children *circumcised*; for the body of the people were often so: But where is this charged as a *sin*? Mr. Stoddard says, (Serm. p. 7.) Ishmael was circumcised, but yet a carnal person. And there is as much reason to say, he was *not* of the character Mr. Williams insists on, "under deep convictions, having earnest desires of grace, a full and fixed determination, with all his heart, to the utmost of his power, to give his whole life to God, &c." Mr. Stoddard says, (Serm. p. 8) Hezekiah sent to invite the people of Ephraim and Manasseh, and other tribes, to celebrate the passover, though they had lived in idolatry for some

ages." But if so, this was as much of an evidence, that they were not of such a character as Mr. Williams insists on, as that they were without sanctifying grace. Mr. Williams says, p. 91, "The Israelites had carefully attended the seal of circumcision, from the time of its institution, till the departure out of Egypt." But surely most of them at the same time were without Mr. Williams's moral sincerity; for it is abundantly manifest, that the body of the people fell away to Idolatry in Egypt. See Lev. xvii. 7. Josh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 8, and xxiii. 3, 8, 27. And there is not the least appearance of any more *exception*, either in the precepts or history of the Old Testament, of the case of *moral insincerity*, in such as attended these ordinances, than of ungodliness, or an unsanctified state.

Mr. Stoddard urges that "Jesus Christ himself partook of the passover, with Judas;" and thence he *would* argue that it was lawful for an *unregenerate* person to partake of the *Lord's* supper. But there can be no argument, in any sort, drawn from this to prove that it is lawful for men to partake of the Lord's supper without *sanctifying grace*, any more than that it is lawful for them to partake without *moral sincerity*: For it is every whit as evident, that Judas was at that time without moral sincerity, as that he was unregenerate. We have no greater evidence, in all the scripture history, of the moral insincerity of any one man than of Judas, at the time when he partook of the passover with Christ; he having just then been and bargained with the high priest, to *betray* him, and being then in prosecution of the horrid design of the murder of the Son of God.

If any thing contrary to my principles could be argued from all Israel's being required, throughout their generations, to come to the *passover* and *circumcision*, it would be this; that all persons, of all sorts, throughout all Christendom, might lawfully come to *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*; godly and ungodly, the knowing and the ignorant, the moral and the vicious, orthodox and heretical, Protestants and Papists alike. But this does not agree with Mr. Williams's principles, any better than with mine.

## SECTION XIII.

### *Concerning* Judas's *partaking of the Lord's Supper.*

I THINK, we have a remarkable instance of tergiversation, in what Mr. Williams says in support of the argument from Judas's partaking of the Lord's supper. By those on his side of the question, it is insisted upon, as a clear evidence of its being lawful for unsanctified men to come to the Lord's table, that Christ gave the Lord's supper to Judas, when he knew he was unsanctified. In answer to which, I shewed, that this is just as much against their own principles, as mine; because Christ knew as perfectly that he was not *morally sincere*, as that he was not *graciously sincere*; and they themselves hold, that it is not lawful for such as are not morally sincere, to partake. Mr. Williams ridicules this, as very impertinent and strange; because "Christ did not know this as head of the visible church, but only as omniscient God and searcher of hearts." And what does this argue? Only, that, although Judas was really not fit to come, yet, inasmuch as Christ, acting as king of the visible church, did not knew it, he *might admit him*: But not that it was *lawful for Judas himself to come*, who knew his own heart in this matter, and knew his own perfidiousness and treachery; for Mr Williams denies, that it is lawful for such to come, as have no moral sincerity. So that here the question is changed, from "Who may lawfully come," to "Who may lawfully be admitted?" Mr. Williams does abundantly, in his book, insist that the question is not, "who shall be admitted; but who may lawfully come?" Not whether it be lawful to admit those who have not a visibility of saintship, or do not appear to be true saints? But whether those who are not true saints, may lawfully partake? And this he insists upon in his discourse on this very argument, p. 104. And to prove this latter point, viz. that "those who are not real saints, may lawfully come," the instance of Judas's coming to the Lord's sup-

per is produced as an undeniable evidence. But when it is answered, that the argument does not prove this, any more than that the morally insincere may lawfully come; because Judas was morally insincere: Then Mr. Williams, p. 106, to shelter himself, dodges, and evidently changes the question, at once, to that which he had so much exclaimed against as *not the question*. Now, to serve his turn, the question is not whether *Judas might lawfully come?* But, whether, *Christ might lawfully admit him*, acting on a public visibility? And he makes an occasion to cry out of me, as talking *strangely*, and soon forgetting that I had said, Christ, in this matter, did not act as searcher of hearts. Whereas, let the question be what it will, the argument from Judas's partaking (should the fact be supposed) if it proves any thing relating to the matter, is perfectly and in every respect, against the one, just as it is against the other. If the question be about *profession and visibility* to others, and whom others may *lawfully admit*, then Judas's being admitted (if he was admitted) no more proves that men may be admitted without a visibility and profession of godliness, than without a visibility of moral sincerity. For it no more appears, that he was without a profession and visibility of the former, than of the latter. But if the question is not about *visibility to others*, or who others *may admit*, but who may *lawfully come*, then Judas's coming no more proves, that a man may come without grace, than without moral sincerity; because he was in like manner without both: And Christ *knew* as perfectly, that he was without the one, as the other; and was not ignorant of the one case, as king of the visible church any more than of the other. So that there is no way to support this argument, or to make any thing at all of it; but the only way left is, to hide the question, by shifting and changing it; to have one question in the premises, and to slip in another into the conclusion. Which is according to the course Mr. Williams takes. In the premises, p. 104, 105, he expressly mentions Mr. Stoddard's question, as now in view; and agreeably must here have this for his question, "whether it was lawful for a man so qualified to come to the Lord's supper?" Who, according to Mr. Williams's own doctrine,

p. 111, ought to act as a discerner of his own heart. But in his conclusion, p. 106, he has this for his question, "Whether Christ might lawfully ADMIT a man so qualified," therein not acting as the searcher of hearts ?.....What shuffling is this ?

## SECTION XIV.

### *Concerning that great Argument, which Mr.* Williams *urges in various parts of his Book, of those being* born *in the Church, who are Children of Parents that are in Covenant.*

IT is hard to understand distinctly what Mr. Williams would be at, concerning this matter, or what his argument is. He often speaks of parents that are in covenant, as *born in covenant*, and so *born in the church*. (For to be in covenant, is the same, with him as to be members of the visible church. See p. 98, 88, 89, 59, 60, 136.) And speaks of them as admitted into the church in their *ancestors*, and by the *profession* of their ancestors, p. 135, 136. Yea, for ought I can see, he holds that they were *born members in* COMPLETE STANDING *in the visible church*, p. 3.

And yet he abundantly speaks of their being ADMITTED into the church, and MADE members, after they are born, viz. by their baptism. And his words (unless we will suppose him to speak nonsense) are such as will not allow us to understand him, merely, that baptism is a *sign and public acknowledgment* of their having been admitted in their ancestors, in preceding generations. For he speaks of baptism as "the ONLY rite (or way) of admission into the visible church," applying it to the baptism of children ; and as that which "MAKES them members of the body of Christ," p. 99. And he grants, that "it was ordained for the ADMISSION of the party baptized into the visible church," p. 99, 100. That "bap-

them in an admission; and that they were then before admitted," p. 100, still speaking of the baptism of infants, and of admission of members into churches. But surely these things do not harmonize with the doctrine of their first receiving being in the church (as a branch receives being in the tree, and grows in it and from it) or their being *born in the covenant, born in the house of God.* And yet these repugnant things are uttered as it were in the same breath by Mr. Williams, p. 99. And he joins them together in the same line, p. 46, in these words: "Baptism instituted by him, as a rite of ADMISSION into his church, and being CONTINUED in covenant with God." Certainly a being then *admitted* into the church, and a being *continued* in covenant (or in the church) into which they were admitted *before*, are not the same thing, nor consistent one with another. If infants are born members in *complete standing*, as it seems Mr. Williams *holds*, then their baptism does nothing towards making them members; nor is there any need of it to make the matter more complete.

Again in p. 3, (the same page where he speaks of infants as members having a complete standing in the church) he maintains, that nothing else is requisite in order to "communion and privileges of members in complete standing, but only that they should be capable hereof, and should desire the same, and should not be under censure, or scandalously ignorant or immoral." See also p. 100, to the same purpose. Mr. Williams says this in opposition to my insisting on something further, viz. making a profession of godliness. And yet he himself insists on something further, as much as I; which has been observed before. For he abundantly insists on a *personal, explicit profession and open declaration* of believing that the gospel is indeed the revelation of God, and of a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, &c. And speaks of the whole controversy as turning upon that single point, of the degree of evidence to be given, and the kind of profession to be made, whether in words of indiscriminate meaning? See p. 5, 6. And consequently not, whether they must make any profession at all, having been completely admitted before, in the profession of their ancestors?

Therefore, if it be so, that the infants of visible believers are born in the church, and are already members in complete standing, and do not drop out of the church, and fall from a complete standing, when they grow up; and therefore if they are not ignorant nor inamoral, and desire full communion, *nothing else* can be required of them: And it will hence follow, contrary to *my* principles, that they cannot be required to make a profession in words of *discriminate* meaning: But then, it also equally follows, contrary to *his* principles, that neither can they be required to make a profession in words of *indiscriminate* meaning. If nothing else besides those forementioned things is necessary, then *no profession* is necessary, in any words at all, neither of determinate nor indeterminate signification. So that Mr. Williams, in supposing some personal profession to be necessary, gives up and destroys this his grand argument.

But if he did not give it up by this means, it would not be tenable on other principles belonging to *his* scheme; such as its being necessary in order to a being admitted to sacraments, that persons should have a visibility that recommends them to the reasonable judgment and apprehension of the minds of others, as true Christians, really pious persons, and that there should be such a profession as exhibits moral evidence of this. For who will say, that the individual profession of an ancestor, a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago, is a credible exhibition and moral evidence of the real piety of his present posterity, without any personal, explicit profession of any thing about religion, in any one of the succeeding generations? And if Mr. Williams had not said, there must be a credible exhibition of *gospel holiness*, but only some common faith or virtue; yet no such thing is made visible to a rational judgment and apprehension of mind, by this means. How, for instance, does it make *orthodoxy* visible? What reasonable ground is there in it, at such a day as this in England, to believe concerning any man, that he believes the doctrine of the Trinity, and all other fundamental doctrines, with full conviction, and with all his heart, because he descended from an ancestor that made a good profession, when the an-

cient Britons or Saxons were converted from heathenism, and because withal he is free from open, scandalous immorality, and appears willing to attend duties of public worship! If an attendance on these public duties was in its own nature a profession of orthodoxy, or even piety; yet the reason of mankind teaches them the need of joining *words and actions* together in public manifestations of the mind, in cases of importance: *Speech* being the great and peculiar talent, which God has given to mankind, as the special means and instrument of the manifestation of their minds one to another. Thus treaties of peace among men are not concluded and finished with actions only, without words. Feasting together was used of old, as a testimony of peace and covenant friendship; as between Isaac and Abimelech, Laban and Jacob, but not without a verbal profession. Giving the hand, delivering the ring, &c. are to express a marriage agreement and union; but still a profession in words is annexed. So we allow it to be needful, after persons have fallen into scandal, that in manifesting repentance there should be a verbal profession, besides attending duties of worship. Earthly princes will not trust a profession of allegiance, in actions only, such as bowing, kneeling, keeping the king's birth day, &c. but they require also a profession in words, and an oath of allegiance is demanded. Yea, it is thought to be reasonably demanded, in order to men's coming to the actual possession and enjoyment of those privileges, they are *born heirs to*. Thus, the eldest sons of noblemen in Greatbritain, are born heirs to the honors and estate of their fathers; yet this no way hinders but they may be obliged when they come to ripeness of age, in order to a being invested in the actual possession, to take the oath of allegiance: Though in order to their lawfully doing it, it may be necessary they should believe in their hearts, that king George is the lawful prince, and that they should not be enemies to him, and friends to the pretender, in their hearts.

But moreover, if this objection of Mr. Williams about infants being born in the church be well considered, it will appear to be all *beside the question*, and so nothing to the pur-

pose. It is not to the purpose of either of the questions, Mr. Williams's or mine. The question as I have stated it, is concerning them that may be *admitted* members in complete standing; not about them that have a complete standing in the church *already*, and so are no candidates for admission; which he says is the case of these infants. And the question as *he* often states it, is concerning them that may *lawfully come*: And this objection, from infants' being *born in the church*, as it must be understood from Mr. Williams, does not touch this question. For when Mr. Williams objects, that some persons are born in the church, and therefore may lawfully come to sacraments, he cannot be understood to mean, that their being *born* in the church *alone* is sufficient; but that, besides this, persons must have some virtue or religion, of one sort or other in order to their lawful coming. For he is full in it, that it is not lawful for men to come without moral virtue and sincerity. Therefore the question comes to this in the result: Seeing persons, besides their being born in covenant, must have some sort of virtue and religion in order to a lawful coming to the Lord's Supper, *What sort* of virtue and religion *that* is, whether *common* or *saving*? Now this question is not touched by the present objection. Merely persons' being *born* in covenant, is no more evidence of their having moral sincerity, than saving grace. Yea, there is more reason to suppose the latter, than the former without it, in the infant children of believing parents. For the scripture gives us ground to think, that some infants have the habit of saving grace, and that they have a new nature given them; but no reason at all to think, that ever God works any mere moral change in them, or infuses any habits of moral virtue without saving grace: And we know, they cannot come by moral habits in infancy, any other way than by immediate infusion: They cannot obtain them by human instruction, nor contract them by use and custom. And especially there is no reason to think, that the children of such as are visible saints, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, have any goodness infused into them by God, of any kind. For in his scheme, all that are morally sincere may lawfully receive the privileges

of visible saints: But we have no scripture grounds to suppose, that God will bless the children of such parents as have nothing more than moral sincerity, with either common or saving grace. There are no promises of the covenant of grace made to such parents, either concerning themselves or their children. The covenant of grace is a conditional covenant; as both sides in this controversy suppose: And therefore, by the supposition, men have no title to the promises without the condition. And as saving faith is the condition, the promises are all made to *that*, both those which respect persons themselves, and those that respect their seed. As it is with many covenants or bargains among men; by these, men are often entitled to possessions for themselves and their heirs: Yet they are entitled to no benefits of the bargain, neither for themselves, nor their children, but by complying with the terms of the bargain. So with respect to *the* covenant of grace, the apostle says, Acts ii. 39. "The promise *is to you* and to your children." So the apostle says to the jailer, Acts xvi. 31. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." And we find many promises, all over the Bible, made to the righteous that God will bless their seed for their sakes. Thus, Psal. cxii. 2. "The generation of the upright shall be blessed." Psal. lxix. 35, 36. "For God will save Zion: The seed also of his servants shall *inherit it*; and they that love his name shall dwell therein." See also Prov. xiv. 26. Psal. ciii. 17, 18. cii. 28. Exod. xx. 5, 6. Deut. vii. 9. Supposing these to be what are called indefinite promises; yet do they extend to any but the *seed of the righteous?* Where are any such promises made to the children of unsanctified men, the enemies of God, and slaves to the devil (as Mr. Williams owns all unsanctified men are) whatever moral sincerity, and common religion they may have?

The baptism of infants is the seal of these promises made to the seed of the righteous: And on these principles, some rational account may be given of infant baptism; but no account can be given of it on Mr. Williams's scheme, no warrant can be found for it in scripture; for they are *promises* that are the warrant for *privileges:* But there are no promis-

es of God's word to the seed of morally sincere men, and only half Christians.

Thus this argument of Mr. Williams's, let us take it which way we will, has nothing but what is as much, yea, much more, against his scheme, than against mine.

However, if this were not the case, but all the shew or pretence of strength there is in the argument, lay directly and only against *me*, yet the strength of it, if tried, will avail to prove nothing. The pretended argument, so far as I can find out what it is, is this: *The children of visible saints are born in covenant; and being already in covenant, they must have a right to the privileges of the covenant, without any more ado: Such therefore have a right to come to the Lord's supper, whether they are truly godly, or not.*

But the shew of argument there is here, depends on the ambiguity of the phrase, *being in covenant*: Which signifies two distinct things: Either (1.) *Being under the obligations and bonds of the covenant*; or (2.) *A being conformed to the covenant, and complying with the terms of it.* A being the subject of the obligations and engagements of the covenant, is a thing quite distinct from a being conformed to these obligations, and so being the subject of the condition of the covenant.

Now it is not a being in covenant in the former, but the latter sense, that gives a right to the privileges of the covenant. The reason is plain, because it is compliance and conformity to the terms of a covenant, that is the thing which gives right to all the benefits; and not merely a being under ties to that compliance and conformity. Privileges are not annexed merely to obligations, but to compliance with obligations.

Many that do not so much as visibly comply with the conditions of the covenant, are some of God's covenant people in *that* sense, that they are under the bonds and engagements of the covenant; so were Corah and his company; so were many gross Idolaters in Israel, that lived openly in that sin; and so may heretics, deists, and atheists be God's covenant people; they may still be held under the bonds of their covenant engagements to God; for their great wickedness and aposta-

sy do not free them from the obligation of the solemn promises and engagements they formerly entered into. But yet a being in covenant, merely in this sense, gives them no right to any privileges of the covenant. In order to that, they must be in covenant in another sense; they must cordially consent to the covenant: Which indeed Mr. Williams himself owns, when he acknowledges, that in order to come to sacraments, men must profess a cordial consent to, and compliance with the conditions of the covenant of grace.* And if Mr. Williams inquires, why those children that were born in the covenant are not *cast out*, when in adult age they make no such profession; certainly it as much concerns *him* to answer, as me; for it is as much his doctrine, as mine, that they must profess such consent. But I am willing to answer nevertheless. They are not cast out because *it* is a matter held in suspense, whether they do cordially consent *to the* covenant, or not; or whether their making no such profession *does not* arise from some other cause. And none are to be excommunicated, without some positive evidence against them. And therefore they are left in the state they were in, in infancy, not admitted actually to partake of the Lord's supper (which actual participation is a new positive privilege) for want of a profession, or some evidence, beyond what is merely negative, to make it visible that they do consent to the covenant. For it is reasonable to expect some appearance more than what is negative, of a proper qualification, in order to being admitted to a privilege beyond what they have hitherto actually received. A negative charity may be sufficient for a negative privilege, such as freedom from censure and punishment; but something more than a negative charity, is needful to actual admission to a new positive privilege.

* If it be said here, those who have been born of baptized ancestors, though they do not comply with the terms of the covenant, are in covenant, in this sense, that they have a right to the promises of the covenant *conditionally*, in case they will hereafter comply: I answer, so are all mankind in covenant. God may be said to have bound himself conditionally to them all; and many have these promises declared to them, that still remain Jews, Mahometans, or Heathens.

## SECTION XV.

### *A particular Examination of Mr.* Williams's *Defence of the 9th* Objection, *or that boasted Argument, that if it be not lawful for* unconverted *Men to come to the Lord's Supper, then none may come but they that* know *themselves to be converted.*

THIS argument has been greatly gloried in, as altogether invincible. Mr. Williams seems to have been alarmed, and his spirits raised to no small degree of warmth at the pretence of an answer to it: And he uses many big words, and strong expressions in his reply; such as, "It is absolutely certain.... It is beyond my power to comprehend, and I believe beyond the power of any man to tell me....This I assert and stand to ....As plain as the sun....A contradiction of the Bible, of the light of nature, and of the common sense of mankind," &c. &c. But let us get away from the noise of a torrent, and bring this matter to the test of calm reasoning, and examine it to the very bottom.

Here let it be considered, wherein precisely the argument consists.....If it has any strength in it, it consists in this proposition, viz. *That it is not lawful for men to come to sacraments, without a known right.* This is the proposition Mr. Stoddard himself reduces the argument to, in his *Appeal*, p. 62, 63. And it is very evident, that the whole strength of the argument rests on the supposed truth of this proposition.

And here let it be noted, what sort of *knowledge* of a right Mr. Stoddard, and so Mr. Williams, means in this argument. It is *knowledge* as distinguished from such an *opinion*, or *hope*, as is *founded in probability*. Thus Mr. Stoddard expressly insists, that a man must not only THINK he has a right, but he must KNOW it. *Appeal*, p. 62. And again, p. 63, he says, *probable hopes will not warrant him to come.*

Mr. Williams uses many peremptory, strong expressions, p. 109, to set forth the certainty of that which never was denied; viz. That *a man cannot know he has a right, unless he knows he has the qualification which gives him a right.* But this is not the thing in question: The point is, *whether a man may not have a lawful right, or may not lawfully come, and yet not know his right, with such a knowledge and evidence as is beyond probability?* This is the thing asserted, and herein lies the argument. And the negative of this cannot be stood to and maintained, in order to maintain Mr. Williams's scheme, without the grossest absurdity; it being a position, which, according to scripture, reason, and Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, and Mr. Williams's own, effectually destroys his scheme.

To this purpose, I observed, If this proposition be true, that no man may come, save he which not only thinks, but *knows* he has a right, then it will follow, that no unconverted person may come, unless he *knows* that doctrine to be true, *that unconverted men may have a right.* Because an unconverted man cannot know that one in particular (viz. he himself) who is an unconverted man, has a right, unless he knows that doctrine which Mr. Stoddard maintained, to be true, viz. that men may have a right, though they are unconverted. And consequently no one unconverted man may lawfully come to the Lord's supper, unless he is so knowing in this point of controversy, as not only to think, and have probable evidence, that this opinion is right, but *knows* it to be so. Mr. Williams endeavors to help the matter by a distinction of different kinds of knowledge: And by the help of this distinction would make it out, that common people in general, and even boys and girls of sixteen years old, may with ease know, that his doctrine about unsanctified men's lawfully coming to the Lord's supper, is true. And we must understand him (as he is defending Mr. Stoddard's argument) that they may know it with that evidence that is distinguished from probability; and this, according to Mr. Williams himself, is *certainty;* which he speaks of as above *a thousand probabilities.* See p. 118. But how miserable is this? To pretend that his doctrine about qualifications for sacraments, is so far from a disputable point,

that it is of such plain and obvious evidence, to common people and even children, that without being studied in divinity, they may not only *think* it to be *exceeding probable*, but *know* it to be *true!* When it is an undeniable fact, that multitudes of the greatest ability and piety, that have spent their lives in the study of the holy scriptures, have never so much as *thought so*.

Again, I observed that according to Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, *not one*, unconverted man in the world can *know* that he has *warrant* to come to the Lord's supper; because, if he has any warrant, God has given him warrant in the *scriptures:* And therefore if any unconverted man, not only *thinks*, but *knows*, that he has warrant from God, he must of consequence not only *think*, but *know* the scriptures to be the word of God. Whereas it was the constant doctrine of Mr. Stoddard, that no unconverted man *knows* the scriptures to be the word of God.* But Mr. Williams would make it out, that Mr. Stoddard did hold, unconverted men might *know* the scriptures to be the word of God; but only not know it with "a gracious knowledge, such as effectually bowed men's hearts, and influenced them to a gracious obedience," p. 113. But let us see whether it was so, or not. Mr. Stoddard in his *Nature of saving Conversion*, p. 73, says, "The carnal man is *ignorant* of the divine authority of the word of God;....his wound is, that he *does not know certainly* the divine authority of these institutions; he *does not know* but they are the inventions of men." Again, *Ibid.* p. 74, he says, "The carnal man is *uncertain* of those things that are the foundation of his reasonings. He thinks there is *a great probability* of the truth of these things; but he has *no assurance*. His principles are grounded on an *uncertain* proposition." And he observes,

* I did not say, that it was also a doctrine according to scripture; for there was no occasion for this, among those with whom I had chiefly to do in this controversy; with whom I knew it was a point as much settled and uncontroverted, as any doctrine of Mr. Stoddard whatever. And I knew it to be the current doctrine of orthodox divines; who ever allow this doctrine to be implied in such texts as those, John xvii. 7. 1 John iv. 15, 16. Chap. v. 1, 10, and many other places.

p. 20, "Men when converted, do not look on it as *probable*, that the word is his word, *as they did before*; but they *have assurance of the truth of it*."....So elsewhere, (*Guide to Christ*, p. 26.) "They that have not grace, *do not properly believe* the word of GOD." And in another book, (*Safety of Ap.* p. 6) "The gospel always works effectually where it is *believed, and received as the truth of* GOD." In another book (*Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 149) "Common illumination *does not convince men of the truth of the gospel*." In his discourse on the *Virtue of Christ's Blood*, p. 27, speaking of such as have no interest in the blood of Christ, he says, "They are *strangers* to the divine authority of the word of GOD." Again, (*Ibid.* p. 16.) "*Before*, [i. e. before saving faith] they were *at a loss* whether the word was the word of GOD." To the like purpose are many other passages in his writings. (See *Nat. of Sav. Conv.* p. 72, *Safety of Ap.* p. 6, 7, 99, 107, 186, 187, 229.....*Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 89.)

So that here, if it be true, that some unconverted men have a divine warrant to come to the Lord's supper; and if the thing which is the foundation of this argument, be also true, viz. that in order to men's warrantably coming to the Lord's supper, they must not only *think*, but *know* they have a right; then it must be true likewise, that they not only *think*, but *know*, that the scripture, wherein this warrant is supposed to be delivered, is the word of GOD. And then we have the following propositions to make hang together: That unconverted men are *ignorant of the scripture's being the word of God, are uncertain of it, have no assurance of it, are not convinced of it, do not properly believe it, are at a loss whether it be the word of God or not*; and yet *they not only think, but* know, *that the scriptures are the word of God, and that the Gospel*, which is the charter of all Christian privileges, *is divine*; they have a *knowledge* of it which is *above all probable hope or thought*, and attended with evidence *above a thousand probabilities*.

And now let it be considered, whether this agrees better with Mr. Williams's own doctrine, concerning men's knowing the truth and divine authority of the gospel, in what has been before cited from his sermons on *Christ a King and Wit-*

*ness.* Where he expressly says, "That man since the fall, is ignorant of divine truth, and full of prejudices against it; has a view of the truth contained in the Bible, as a doubtful, uncertain thing; receives it as what is probably true; sees it as a probable scheme, and something likely to answer the end proposed: But that *after conversion* it appears divinely true and real. See p. 114, 115 and 144. *Then* unconverted men only looked on the truth of the word of God, as *probable, something likely*, yet as a *doubtful, uncertain thing;* but *now* they *not only think*, but *know it to be true.*

No distinction about the different kinds of knowledge, or the various ways of knowing, will ever help these absurdities, or reconcile such inconsistencies. If there be any such sort of *knowing*, as is contradistinguished to probable *thinking*, and to such opinion as is built on *a thousand probabilities*, which is yet consistent with being *ignorant, not believing, being uncertain, not assured, not convinced, only looking on a thing probable, looking on it doubtful and uncertain*, it must certainly be a new and very strange sort of knowledge.

But this argument, that is so clear and invincible, must have such supports as these, or must quite sink to the earth. It is indeed a remarkable kind of argument. It is not only as much against the scheme it is brought to support, as against that which it would confute; but abundantly more so. For if it were the case in truth, that none might come to the Lord's supper, but they that *know* they have a right, yet it would be no direct and proper proof, that *unconverted* men might come. It would indeed prove, that many *godly* men might *not* come: Which, it is true, would bring some difficulty on the scheme *opposed;* yet it would be no proof against it. But it is direct and perfect demonstration against the scheme it would *support:* It demonstrates according to the scripture, and according to the doctrine of those that urge the argument, that not one unconverted man in the world may lawfully come to the Lord's supper; as no one of them certainly *knows* the gospel to be divine, and so no one *knows* the charter to be authentic, in which alone the right of any to Christian privileges is conveyed; hence no one unsanctified

man is *sure* of his right; and therefore (as they draw the consequence, no one unsanctified man may come to the Lord's supper. And so it follows, that the more strongly Mr. Williams stands to this argument, the more peremptory and confident his expressions are concerning it, the more violently and effectually does he supplant himself.

And this position, *that a man must not take any privilege, till he not only thinks, but knows he has a right*, is not only unreasonable, as used by Mr. Williams against me, when indeed it is ten times as much against himself; but it is unreasonable in itself, as it is an argument, which if allowed and pursued, will prove that a man may do nothing at all, never move hand or foot, for his own advantage, unless he first, not only *thinks*, but *knows*, it is his duty. Mr. Williams himself owns, p. 116, that all the duties, which God requires of us in his instituted worship, are *privileges*, as well as the Lord's supper: And so is every other duty, which we are to do for our own benefit. But all human actions are, upon the whole, either *good* or *evil*: Every thing that we do as rational creatures, is either a duty, or a sin; and the neglect of every thing that is our duty, is forbidden. So that we must never so much as take a step, or move a finger, upon only a probable judgment and hope; but must first *know* it to be our duty, before we do it: Nay, we must neither move, nor voluntarily forbear to move, without a *certainty* of our duty in the case, one way or other!

As to its being *alike difficult* for men to know or be assured of their moral sincerity, as of their real sanctification, I shall speak to that under the next head; whereby it will appear again, another way, that this argument is vastly more against Mr. Williams's scheme, than mine.

## SECTION XVI.

### *A Consideration of Mr.* Williams's *Defence of the* Tenth Objection, *against the* Doctrine *of the unlawfulness of* unsanctified *Men's coming to the Lord's Supper, that it tends to the great* Perplexity *and* Torment *of many* godly *Men in their Attendance on this Ordinance.*

MY *first* reply to this objection was, that it is for want of like tenderness of conscience, that the other doctrine which insists on *moral sincerity*, does not naturally bring such as are received on those principles, into as great *perplexities*.....Mr. Williams in his animadversion upon it says, "This is an assertion which I take to be contrary to common sense, and the experience of mankind; and the allowing of it to be true, must overthrow the law of nature, and cast infinite reproach upon the Author of it."

These are strong expressions; but let us bring the matter to the test of reason. The necessary qualification, on Mr. Williams's principles, is moral sincerity, and a *certain degree* of moral sincerity. For there is scarcely any man, that lives under the light of the gospel, and is not an atheist or deist, but what has *some degree* of moral sincerity, in some things pertaining to Christianity and his duty; some degree of common faith, some degree of conviction of the need of Christ, some desire of him, and moral willingness, though from selfish considerations, to be good; and some purpose to endeavor a conformity to the covenant of Grace, and to seek salvation on the terms of it. But how shall a man know what is a *sufficient degree* of these things? Mr. Williams has determined the matter thus: That his belief of the doctrine of the gospel, and moral willingness to be conformed to the covenant of grace, must be *with his* WHOLE *heart*, p. 49, 5, 36. And that his conviction of his undone state without Christ

must be *deep* ; and his desire of Christ and his benefits *fervent*, and his purpose *earnest*, p. 75, 11, so as to induce him to enter into covenant *with* ALL *the earnestness he can*, and engage him to use endeavors *with* ALL *the strength and power that he has*. p. 83, 32, 36.

Now how exceedingly difficult must it be for unsanctified men to determine, with any assurance, whether they have moral sincerity to *such a degree ?* How difficult for them to know, whether their convictions are thus *deep ?* Every one that is used to deal with souls under conviction, knows, that when they are indeed under deep convictions, they are especially apt to complain of the hardness of their hearts, and to think their convictions are *not* deep. How difficult to determine, with any assurance, whether their assent rises so high, that they can truly be said to *believe with all their hearts ?* Whether their moral willingness to be conformed to the covenant of grace, be *with their whole heart ?* And whether they are really engaged *with all the solicitude they can*, and are willing to do *all that they can ?* These things, I am pretty sure, are of vastly more difficult determination, than whether a man has any true holiness, or not. For in the former case, the determination is concerning the degree of things, that are capable of an infinite variety of degrees ; some of which are nearer to, and others are farther from, the lowest *sufficient* degree : And consequently some of the degrees that are not sufficient, may yet be very near ; which renders the matter of very difficult determination ; unspeakably more so, than when what is to be distinguished, is the *nature* of things, which in *all degrees* is widely diverse, and even contrary to that which it is to be distinguished from : As is the case between saving and common grace ; which Mr. Williams himself acknowledges.* It is more easy to distinguish light from darkness, though there may be innumerable degrees of light, than to determine the precise *degree* of light : And so it is more

* See his sermon on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 84, where he says, "Notwithstanding the visible likeness of nominal and real Christians, there is a wide difference, as there is between the subjects of Christ, and the slaves of the devil."

easy to determine, whether a man be alive, or dead, than whether there be exactly such a certain degree of vigor and liveliness.

This *moral sincerity* which Mr. Williams insists on, is a most indeterminate, uncertain thing; a phrase without any certain, precise meaning; and must forever remain so. It being not determined *how much* men must be morally sincere; *how much* they must believe with a moral sincerity; whether the deeply awakened and convinced sinner must believe, that God is absolutely sovereign *with respect to his salvation*, and that Christ is perfectly sufficient to *save him in particular*; and to what *degree* of moral assent and consent, he must believe and embrace these things, and comply with the terms of the covenant of grace; whether he must be willing to obey all God's commands, the most difficult, as well as the most easy, and this in all circumstances, even the most difficult that can arise in providence; or whether only in some circumstances; and what, and how many. The scripture gives us many infallible rules, by which to distinguish saving grace, and common: But I know of no rules given in the Bible, by which men may certainly determine this *precise degree* of moral sincerity. So that if *grace* is not the thing which gives a right to sacraments in the sight of God, we have no certain rule in the Bible, commensurate to the understanding of mankind, by which to determine when we have a right, and when not. Now let the impartial reader judge, which scheme lays the greatest foundation for perplexity to communicants, of tender consciences, concerning their qualifications for the Lord's supper; and whether this argument drawn from such a supposed tendency to such perplexity (if there be any force in it) is not vastly more against Mr. Williams's scheme, than mine.

And, here by the way, let it be noted, that by these things it is again demonstrated, that the *ninth objection*, the great argument considered in the preceding section, concerning the necessity of a *known right*, in order to a lawful partaking, is exceedingly more against Mr. Williams's principles, than mine; inasmuch as, on his principles, it is so much more

difficult for men to know whether they have a right, or have the prescribed qualification, or not.

I answered this argument in the *second* place, by alleging that this doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to a right to the Lord's supper, is not properly the *cause* of the perplexities of doubting saints, in their attendance on this ordinance; though it may be the occasion: But that their own negligence and sin is the true cause; and that this doctrine is no more the cause of these perplexities, than the doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to salvation, is the cause of the perplexity of doubting saints when they come to *die*. Upon which Mr. Williams says, "There is no shadow of resemblance of these cases, because death is no ordinance, &c. But if death is no ordinance, yet it is the required duty of the saints to *yield themselves to the Lord*, and *resign* to the will of God, in their death. And in this respect the cases are exactly parallel, that *perplexities* are just so much the *consequence* of the respective doctrines, in one case as in the other; that is, the perplexities of a doubting saint on a *death bed*, the difficulty and trouble he meets with in resigning himself to the will of God in dying, is just in the same manner the consequence of the doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to eternal salvation, as the perplexities of a doubting saint at the *Lord's table* are the consequence of the doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to a right to the Lord's supper. And this is sufficient for my purpose.

Mr. Williams himself says, in his answer to Mr. Croswell, p. 122, "Although there are comparatively few that obtain assurance; yet it is through their own sloth and negligence, that they do not. We fully agree with Mr. Perkins that a man in this life may ordinarily be infallibly certain of his salvation." So Mr. Stoddard, in his sermon on *One good Sign*, says, "There is no necessity that the people of God should lie under darkness and temptation; they may obtain assurance." Now, if this be the case, then certainly there is no justice in laying the temptation and uneasiness, which is the effect of sloth and negligence, to the doctrine I maintain, in

those that embrace it. It is a wise dispensation of God, that he has so ordered things, that comfort in ordinances, and in all duties, and under all providences, should be to be obtained in a way of diligence; and that slothfulness should be the way to perplexity and uneasiness, and should be a way *hedged up with thorns*, agreeable to Prov. xv. 19. That it is so ordered, is for the good of the saints, as it tends to turn them out of this thorny path, into the way of diligence. And so this doctrine, as it has this tendency, has a tendency in the end to that solid peace and comfort, which is the happy fruit of their holy diligence. And that, and not the saints' perplexity, is properly the effect of this doctrine.

## SECTION XVII.

### *Containing some* further *Observations on what is said by Mr.* Williams *in support of the* Thirteenth Objection, *concerning God's* commanding *all the Members of the visible Church, that are* not ignorant nor scandalous, *to attend all* external *Covenant Duties.*

IT has been already demonstrated (Sect. 8th of this third part) that in this argument the question is begged, notwithstanding what Mr. Williams has said to the contrary; which sufficiently overthrows the whole argument. Nevertheless, that I may pass by nothing, which such as are on Mr. Williams's side, may be likely to think material; I will here make some further observations on this objection, as represented and supported by Mr. Williams.

The chief thing that has the plausible appearance of argument in what Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams say on this head, is this; that "for God to require all who are in covenant to come to the Lord's supper, and yet to forbid them to

come unconverted, is to suppose, that he both commands them, and forbids them at the same time." And this is thought to be the more manifest, inasmuch as *conversion is not in men's power*. Though it is not denied, but that God justly requires men to be converted, or to be truly holy. See p. 129, 130.

To this I would say,

(1.) If when they speak of commanding and forbidding at the same time, they mean God's commanding and forbidding *the same thing*, at the same time, no such consequence follows from my principles. For *that* thing, and that only, which I suppose God requires of any, is to come to the Lord's supper with a sanctified heart; and that this God requires at *all times*, and never forbids at *any time*; and that to come without this qualification, is what he *always* forbids and *requires at no time*. So that *what* he requires, at the same time he forbids something, is not the same thing that *he* forbids; but a very different and contrary one: And it is no absurdity, to suppose, that God requires one thing, and forbids a contrary thing at the same time.

To illustrate this by an example: It was the duty of the Jews at Jerusalem, openly to *confess* CHRIST, to own him as the *Messiah*, at that hour when he was led away to be crucified, and openly to testify their adoring respect to him on that extraordinary occasion. But yet they did not believe him to be the *Messiah* and could not believe it (many of them at least) since they looked on his present, abject circumstances as a demonstration, that he was not the *Messiah*. It was beyond their power, at least at once, in that instant to give their assent, with all their hearts to such a supposition. Nor was it in their power, to exercise an adoring respect to him: For, besides their strong prejudices, most of them were judicially hardened, and given up to a spirit of unbelief and obstinate rejection of him; as appears by that account, John xii. 39, 40. "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes," &c. See also Luke xix. 41, 42, and Matth. xiii. 14, 15. And yet it would

have been unlawful for them to have made a lying profession; to profess, that they believed him to be the *Messiah*, and that they received and loved him as such, when at the same time they hated him, and did not believe he was the *Messiah*. But here is no requiring and forbidding the same thing at the same time: For the only thing required of them was, to have faith and love, and to testify it; which was not at all forbidden.

(2.) None of the difficulties which Mr. Stoddard or Mr. Williams objects, either God's supposed requiring impossibilities, or his requiring and forbidding at the same time, do follow, any more on *my* principles, than on Mr. Williams's. Mr. Williams maintains, that God calls men *this moment* to enter into covenant with him, and commands them to do it, p. 28. One thing implied in this, according to his own frequent explanation of visibly entering into covenant, is professing a belief of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Now therefore we will suppose a man to be a candidate for baptism, who has been brought up in Arianism; and is strongly persuaded, that the doctrine of the TRINITY is not true: Yet he is this moment required to profess that doctrine; but has no ability in a moment to believe the doctrine, because he does not at present see the evidence of it. For as Mr. Williams himself says, in sermon on *Christ a King and Witness* p. 91, 92. "The understanding cannot be brought to yield its assent to any truth, which it does not see the truth or apprehend the evidence of. If you would hire him with cartloads, or shiploads of gold and silver; if you would imprison him, whip him, burn him; you cannot make him believe a thing to be true, which he apprehends to be incredible, or which he sees no sufficient reason to believe." Now therefore, what shall the man do, on Mr. Williams's principles? He is commanded to profess the doctrine of the Trinity, which must be professed in order to be lawfully baptized in the name of the Trinity; and, on Mr. Williams's principles, he is commanded to do it *this moment*: Yet also on his principles, if the man professes it, and is not morally sincere, or knows he does not believe it, he is guilty of *horrible falsehood and prevarica-*

*tion* ; which God doubtless forbids. Therefore here is certainly as much of an appearance of commanding and forbidding the same thing at the same time, as in the other case.

Every husbandman in Israel, that lived even in Christ's time, was required to offer a basket of the first fruits ; and was commanded, when he offered it, solemnly to make that profession, concerning the principal facts relating to the redemption out of Egypt, which is prescribed in Deut. xxvi. 5 ....10. "A Syrian ready to perish was my father," &c. Now supposing there had been an Israelite, who did not believe the truth of all these facts, which came to pass so many ages before (as there are now many in Christendom, who do not believe the facts concerning Jesus Christ) and continued in his unbelief, until the very moment of his offering ; God peremptorily requires him to make this profession ; yet none will say, that he may lawfully profess these things, at the same time when he does not believe them to be true. However, here is no commanding and forbidding the same thing at the same time : Because, though God required the Jews to make this profession, yet the thing required was to *believe it* and *profess it*. Though some might not believe it, nor be able for the present to believe it ; yet this inability arose from depravity and wickedness of heart, which did not at all excuse their unbelief, for *one moment*.* Mr. Williams himself owns,

* This instance may shew us, that God's requiring all Israel to enter into covenant with him, and seal their covenant in the passover, will not prove, that it was lawful for any to avouch the Lord to be their God, and promise and swear they would perform universal and persevering obedience, when at the same moment they had no love to God, and even then, while speaking the words, continued in an habitual, wilful disobedience to God's commands, and were willing slaves to the devil Nor will it follow, from these commands given to the Israelites, concerning their covenanting with God, and sealing their covenant, that God ever did, since the foundation of the world, appoint or command any other covenanting with him, than as giving up themselves wholly and without reserve, both soul and body, both heart and life; or that ever he appointed or commanded any covenanting, wherein men give a part, and keep back a part, give him the outside, and keep back the noblest and best part, the heart, will and affections, for sin and Satan ; or that there is any such covenant of God in being ; or that such covenanting has not al-

p. 129, that God may require those things which are out of men's natural power.

Now this may be laid down as a truth, of easy and plain evidence: *If God may require what wicked men, while such, are unable to perform, then he may also require those things which are connected with it, and depend on it, and which, if the other be done, they would be able to do, and might do, and without which they may not do it.* So, if God may require an unsanctified man to love him, then he may require him to testify and profess his love, as I suppose Christians do in the act of partaking of the Lord's supper; and yet it not be lawful for him to testify and profess love, when he has it not.

ways been as much without foundation in any institution of God, as any of the spurious sacraments of the church of Rome; or that it has not always been strictly forbidden of God; or that it is not absolutely and in itself sinful and unlawful, truly as the act of Ananias and Sapphira.

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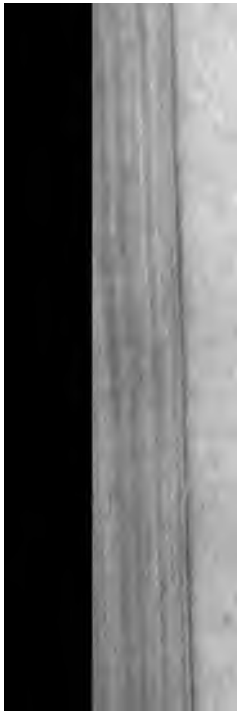

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